BYZANTINISCHE FORSCHUNGEN

Internationale Zeitschrift für Byzantinistik

herausgegeben
von
WALTER E. KAEGI, Jr.

BAND XXIV

VERLAG ADOLF M. HAKKERT - AMSTERDAM
1997

CONFORMITY AND NON-CONFORMITY IN BYZANTIUM

Papers given at the Eighth Conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, University of New England, Australia, July 1993

edited by

LYNDA GARLAND

VERLAG ADOLF M. HAKKERT - AMSTERDAM
1997

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Note vii

INTRODUCTION

Were the Byzantines Creative or Merely Imitative?
— G.T. Dennis, S.J. 1

I. HISTORIANS AND THE EARLY CHURCH

1. Church History as Non-Conformism: Retributive and Eschatological Elements in Athanasius and Philostorgius
— G.W. Trompf 11

2. Eccentrics and Coenobites in the Late Roman East
— P. Roussseau 35

3. Daniel of Salah: a Sixth Century West Syrian Interpreter of the Psalms — A. Sunderland 51

4. Eleventh-Century Reformers' Views of Constantine
— H.E.J. Cowdrey 63

II. MANUSCRIPTS AND SOURCES

1. Traditions of Constantinopolitan Preaching: Towards a New Assessment of Where Chrysostom Preached What
— P. Allen & W. Mayer 93

2. Wonder-Working Ikons and the Letters to Theophilos
— J.A. Munitiz 115

3. The Historical Method of Constantine Porphyrogenitus
— R.G. Tanner 125

4. Triodia Manuscripts: the Problem of Classification
— A. Quinlan 141

5. The Translation of the *Targum Of Psalms*: a Report
— M. Wilcox 153

III. CULTURAL & RELIGIOUS CONTINUITY: THE SIXTH CENTURY
1. Consensus and Dissensus on Public Spectacles in Early Byzantium — R. Lim 159

2. Olympiodorus and the Surrender of Paganism — H.A.S. Tarrant 181

3. Covering The Nakedness Of Noah: Reconstruction and Denial in the Age of Justinian — P.T.R. Gray 193

4. The Role of the Prophet Elijah in the Transfiguration Mosaics at Sinai and Classe — C. Milner 207

IV. SOCIETY AND COURT
1. Variations in Byzantine Imperial Ceremonial: the *De Ceremoniis* of Constantine Porphyrogennetos — A. Moffatt 219

2. Outsiders by *Taxis*: Perceptions of Non-Conformity in Eleventh and Twelfth-Century Literature. — D.C. Smythe 229

3. The Amphibious Serpent: Manuel I and the Venetians — A.F. Stone 251

4. Morality versus Politics at the Byzantine Court: the Charges against Mary of Antioch and Euphrosyne — L. Garland 259

V. BYZANTIUM AND ITS FUTURE
1. Making Data Conform: Computerising the Evergetis Project — D.C. Smythe 297

2. Some Latter-Day Byzantine Non-Conformists from the Prose of Patrick White — J.S. Ryan 315

VI. BUILDING ON THE CLASSICAL PAST
1. Retrofit Ecclesia: a Non-Conforming Building Type — P.M. Milojevic 343

2. Building Harbours in the Early Byzantine Era: the Persistence of Roman Technology — R.L. Hohlfelder 367

PLATES 381

BYZANTINISCHE FORSCHUNGEN

Internationale Zeitschrift für Byzantinistik

herausgegeben
von
WALTER E. KAEGI, Jr.

BAND XXIV

VERLAG ADOLF M. HAKKERT - AMSTERDAM
1997

I.S.B.N. 90-256-0619-9
I.S.B.N. 90-256-1107-9

EDITORIAL NOTE

In 1993, from 2nd to 4th July, some eighty Byzantinists from Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America gathered at the University of New England, on the Northern Tablelands of New South Wales. The occasion of the meeting was the eighth conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, and the theme "Conformity and Non-Conformity in Byzantium". A selection of the papers delivered at this meeting are edited here.

Our thanks are due to the Department of Classics and Ancient History which hosted the meeting, and to all the speakers and participants at the conference. Abbreviations in this volume conform to those used in the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium.*

Lynda Garland
University of New England,
Australia

INTRODUCTION

WERE THE BYZANTINES CREATIVE OR MERELY IMITATIVE?

George T. Dennis / Catholic University of America

The people we call Byzantines seemed obsessed with their past, as is clear from the very name they used for themselves and their nation: Roman. They also called themselves Christians and thought of themselves in biblical terms, the chosen people. They constantly appealed to the authority of antiquity, whether in literature, law, or medicine. In theory there was no break between the ancient Roman empire and their own. There was only the one Roman empire intended by God to include within its borders the entire civilised world.[1] Such was the divine plan. To challenge it would be blasphemy. This theory, of course, had corollaries in all aspects of life. Does it mean that Byzantine civilisation was the end of the line, that it merely continued and imitated antiquity, that it might even be called stagnant? On the other hand, Constantinople was a great cosmopolitan city, crowded with strangers and visitors, and the provinces were subject to vast demographic changes. Did these new people bring new ideas with them? Did the Byzantines themselves produce anything new? To answer this one must look at a wide range of Byzantine achievements, their political and legal system, their literature, their buildings, their military tactics and technology, their medical practice, their theological developments, and a host of other subjects. Then we can ask the question which the Byzantines themselves would never think of asking: did they simply imitate what was already there or did they display any originality or creativity?

In raising the question of Byzantine originality or the lack thereof I am not necessarily proposing, or even looking for, an answer. At this stage it seems sufficient to pose the question and to see where that leads us. In this brief paper we cannot investigate all aspects of Byzantine civilisation, and we must leave out many promising areas: agriculture, veterinary science, water works, and others. We must also be somewhat general in our presentation.

---

1 For modern formulations of the Byzantine world view, see F. DÖLGER, "Die Kaiserurkunden der Byzantiner als Ausdruck ihrer politischen Anschauungen," *Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt*, Ettal 1953; R. JENKINS, *Byzantium and Byzantinism*, Cincinnati 1963, repr. University of Cincinnati Classical Studies I, Princeton 1967.

This is not a scholarly paper in the usual sense, that is, it is not a detailed, footnoted discussion of a specific topic, but is much broader in scope.

The Byzantine attitude toward government was basically very conservative, and the empire remained a nearly unique example of an autocratic, highly centralised state in the western middle ages. It was not until the thirteenth century that it began to break apart into relatively autonomous regions. Yet, while the imperial throne retained its central position, the old Roman administrative divisions were proving unwieldy, especially as the western lands were overrun by Germanic tribes. Even Constantine's move of the capital to the shores of the Bosporos did not assure adequate defence against the constant pressure from without, and this was particularly true after Egypt and Syria fell under the control of hostile powers. The Byzantine solution, as is well known, was the so-called theme system. Without entering into the details, some of which are quite controverted, the system of themes — theme being the term for an army corps — combined civil and military authority.[2] The *strategos* or military commander was also the provincial governor. Those who worked the land provided, in one fashion or another, military service. The advantages of the system were undeniable. For the state it was far less expensive and far less risky than hiring foreign, often unreliable, mercenaries. The soldiers living in the themes were highly motivated, for they were defending their own homes and families. They could be more rapidly deployed against invading forces and could hold them at bay until reinforcements arrived from other themes or from the capital.

This theme system clearly did not derive from antiquity, but was a Byzantine institution designed to deal with the new circumstances in which the empire found itself. It lasted for centuries, and one could argue that it was a major factor in the survival and prosperity of the empire. One must also bear in mind that it was not a static system, but underwent continual change and adaptation. Large themes were broken down into smaller ones. Some distant regions were organised into duchies and katepanates. Along the eastern borders there were formed the so-called small (*mikra*) and Armenian themes, as well as smaller units called *kleisourai*.

---

2 A great deal has been written about the theme system; see A. PERTUSI, *La formation des thémes byzantins*, Berichte zum XI intern. Byzantinisten-Kongress I, Munich 1958; J. KARAYANNOPOULOS, *Die Entstehung der byzantinischen Themenordnung*, Munich 1959; W. KAEGI, "Some Reconsiderations on the Themes (seventh-ninth centuries)," *JÖB* 16, 1967, pp. 39–53; G. OSTROGORSKY, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. J. HUSSEY, rev. ed., New Brunswick 1969, pp. 96–101 with bibliography.

Ultimately, of course, the system broke down, largely because the governors and wealthy landowners managed to take more and more land from the smaller landowners. The emperors tried to prevent this, but without success. By the end of the eleventh century it was too late to restore the theme system, and the central government lacked the power, and perhaps the imagination, to come up with another administrative-military organisation.

In his efforts to codify the law, Justinian stated his desire to return to the venerable authority of antiquity. Law had been the glory of the Roman empire, and Justinian would make it the glory of his renewed empire. The jurists whom he designated to put order into the huge pile of Roman law and jurisprudence drew upon earlier writings to bring the innumerable and often contradictory rulings of Roman jurists into an organised system. But they went beyond that and abbreviated and altered the law to bring it into line with contemporary society and with Christian ideals.[3] But the chief characteristic of the Justinianic legislation was its heavy emphasis on the powers of the emperor, which would be very influential in shaping subsequent legal and political thought in both east and west. It was not simply a restoration of Roman law, but the beginning of a new era in the history of law. The legal edifice, however, once erected, was not to remain immovable. It was constantly augmented, redefined, and altered by later rulers and, more importantly, it was interpreted and applied with a great deal of flexibility.[4]

Threatened on all sides by powerful and implacable foes, the Byzantine empire of necessity had to be a military state. With its very survival at stake, Byzantium proved to be most innovative and adaptable. The armed forces of the empire continuously improved their tactics and technology to adapt to the changing circumstances of war.

The Roman legion, which had defended and expanded the empire, eventually became obsolete and was superseded by smaller units of mounted archers, a process rendered more permanent by the acquisition of the stirrup. The army, though, was composed largely of semi-independent troops following their own warlord. In the last two decades of the sixth century the emperor Maurice set about transforming them into a truly national army,

---

3 In general, see P. PIELER, "Byzantinische Rechtsliteratur," in H. HUNGER, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, II, Munich 1978, pp. 341–480.

4 Cf. D. SIMON, *Rechtsfindung am byzantinischen Reichsgericht*, Frankfurt 1973; N. OIKONOMIDES, "The 'Peira' of Eustathios Romaios: an abortive Attempt to Innovate in Byzantine Law," *Fontes Minores*, VII, D. SIMON (ed.), *Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte*; Frankfurt 1986, pp. 169–192.

whose officers were strictly subordinate to the imperial government. The army became more cohesive, centralised, and professional.[5]

The basic military unit was the *bandon*, a company of about three hundred soldiers. The word itself was Germanic, signifying both the unit, also called *tagma*, *numerus*, or *arithmos*, and its banner. Its incorporation into larger units under the command of a general is explained in the *Strategikon* of Maurice. The Byzantine *bandon*, which merits a place in military history at least equal to that of the Macedonian phalanx and the Roman legion, proved remarkably effective and, along with improvements in tactics and weaponry, was the mainstay of the army for some three centuries. In the tenth it was still, with some changes in terminology, fundamental to the military structure described in the *Tactical Constitutions* of Leo VI. One must remember, however, that the Byzantine military organisation was never static, but was constantly adapted to the changing exigencies of war. In fact, while discipline and armament were important, it was the remarkable ability to adapt to new situations and new enemies that guaranteed Byzantine military success.

In the late tenth century the army again underwent far reaching changes. Byzantine military doctrine and practice had strongly emphasised defence.[6] Under the leadership of Nikephoros Phokas it came to place more stress on offensive action, and new tactics were developed, which have not yet received the scholarly attention they merit.[7]

In constructing fortifications the Byzantines also went beyond what they had inherited from antiquity. Again, much remains to be studied, both about fortifications and siege warfare, but one can form some idea of their skill by examining the walls of Constantinople or Nicaea.[8] One can also consider the Byzantine expeditionary camp, descended from the old Roman one, but with

---

5 See G. DENNIS (ed.), *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, with German trans. by E. GAMILLSCHEG, CFHB 17, Vienna 1981; English trans. by G. DENNIS, *Maurice's Strategikon*, Philadelphia 1984.

6 This is clear from a reading of the Byzantine military treatises, such as the *Strategikon* of Maurice; G. DENNIS (ed.), *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*, CFHB 25, Washington 1985; see also W. KAEGI, *Some Thoughts on Byzantine Military Strategy*, Brookline 1983.

7 This is discussed by E. McGEER in his edition and translation of the *Praecepta militaria* of Nikephoros Phokas, now in press at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington.

8 Cf. C. FOSS & D. WINFIELD, *Byzantine Fortifications. An Introduction*, Pretoria 1986. One should also note the edition, with translation and commentary, of a tenth century treatise on siege warfare, attributed to Hero of Byzantium, being prepared for publication by D. SULLIVAN.

important changes.[9] As far as advances in weapons are concerned, one immediately thinks of what is called Greek fire, invented perhaps by a Syrian, but put to very effective use by the Byzantines. Less well known are the Byzantine advances in artillery. First, they employed the traction trebuchet, including some extremely large machines, to great advantage. And the counterweight trebuchet, the heavy artillery of the middle ages, which radically changed siege warfare, may well have been a Byzantine invention.[10]

More noteworthy, perhaps, than their military accomplishments was the Byzantine attitude toward warfare. War, so they explicitly declared, was the worst of evils, to be engaged in only when the cause was just and as a last resort. In dealing with their enemies they would first try diplomacy, bribery, paying tribute, covert action, and hiring other tribes to do the fighting. And, if they did have to go to war, they sought to avoid actual combat and, instead, tried to wear out the foe by strategy and adroit manoeuvring. All told, it was a vastly different approach than that of the medieval west.

Another area in which the Byzantines improved vastly on their inheritance from antiquity — and for which they have received very little credit — is that of medical care. The Byzantines inherited a sizeable corpus of medical writings, and they assiduously studied Hippocrates and Galen. While they did not add much to the written body of material, they did make several advances in practice, although it is poorly documented. But they did make one major, creative contribution to health care, and that was the hospital (*xenon*) as we know it, an institution which provides beds, meals, and nursing care for patients undergoing medical therapy at the hands of professional physicians. Such an institution did not exist in the ancient world, nor would it exist in the west for some time to come. It was strictly a Byzantine development.[11]

But enough of practical matters. Let us turn to affairs of the mind and the soul. It is perhaps in the realm of literature that Byzantine civilisation has been most severely criticised for a lack of originality. We need only recall

---

9 See J. KULAKOVSKIJ, "Vizantijskij lager' kontsa X veka," *VizVrem* 10, 1903, pp. 63–91; also the third treatise in DENNIS (ed.), *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*, pp. 246–327.

10 See the forthcoming study by P. CHEVEDDEN, *The Artillery Revolution of the Middle Ages: The Impact of the Trebuchet on the Development of Fortifications*. He claims that the first recorded use of the counterweight trebuchet was at the Byzantine siege of Zevgminon in 1165, as recorded in Niketas CHONIATES, *Historia*, ed. J.A. van DIETEN, CFHB 11, Berlin & New York 1984, p. 134.

11 See T. MILLER, *The Birth of the Hospital in the Byzantine Empire*, Baltimore & London 1985.

the harsh judgments of Romilly Jenkins and Cyril Mango.[12] In recent years, though, some scholars have sought to temper such negative verdicts. In 1977 Antony Littlewood strongly urged Byzantinists to study that literature in a more attentive and sympathetic manner.[13] In the following year Jakov Ljubarskij insisted that we cast off the prevailing negative views of Byzantine literature and that, in particular, we recognise the creative genius of Michael Psellos and accord him the place he deserves on our bookshelves along with Shakespeare, Voltaire, and Dostoevsky.[14] Alexander Kazhdan has also stressed a more positive approach and suggests that we may have been asking ourselves the wrong questions.[15]

Perhaps the change in attitude may be partially attributed to the number of Byzantine writings which have been translated into modern languages. Niketas Choniates is a good example; his Greek is not always easy to comprehend, but in translation he has undoubtedly reached a much wider audience.[16] It is true that in compiling their histories Byzantine authors were very conscious of classical models and often set out expressly to imitate them. Sometimes, as we all know, this renders their accounts of dubious value. Take Kantakouzenos' description of the plague. Is he writing about the plague which struck Athens in the fifth century B.C., described by Thucydides, or about that which killed so many people in Constantinople in his own day?[17] Still, their writings contain many passages of serious historical interest, as well as of literary merit. In the court of world literature some passages from the histories of Psellos, Anna Comnena, Choniates, and others can certainly hold their own. Dare we call these writers creative or

---

12 R. JENKINS, "The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Literature," *DOP* 17, 1963, pp. 9–52; C. MANGO, *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror*, Inaugural Lecture, Oxford 1975, repr. in *Byzantium and Its Image*, London 1984.

13 "Artistry and Tradition in Byzantine Romantic Gardens," delivered at the Byzantine Studies Conference in New York in 1977 and published in *BMGS* 5, 1979, pp. 95–114. See also H.G. BECK, *Das literarische Schaffen der Byzantiner; Wege zu seinem Verständnis*, Vienna 1974; E.A. HANAWALT, "Dancing with Rhetoricians in the Gardens of the Muses: Recent Contributions to the Study of Byzantine Literature," *BS/EB* 13, 1987, pp. 1–23.

14 *Mikhail Psell. Ličnost' i Tvorčestvo*, Moscow 1978, p. 3.

15 *People and Power in Byzantium*, Washington 1982, pp. 96–116.

16 H. MAGOULIAS, *O City of Byzantium. Annals of Niketas Choniates*, Detroit 1984. See E.A. HANAWALT, *An Annotated Bibliography of Byzantine Sources in English Translation*, Brookline 1988.

17 See T. MILLER, "The Plague in John VI Cantacuzenus and Thucydides," *GRBS* 17, 1976, pp. 385–395.

original? They would probably not understand the question, and perhaps it should not be asked. Still, it is clear that many Byzantine authors have done more than merely imitate classical models.

Of course, often enough they did just that, imitate classical models, as we can see in their orations, *ekphraseis*, and other compositions. But on occasion their imitations take on a life of their own, for example, the Lucianic dialogues which resulted in the *Timarion* and *Mazaris*.[18] Few readers today would wax enthusiastic over Byzantine secular poetry, although one may find a little noticed gem here and there.[19] But, most would acknowledge the contribution, perhaps even the creativity of their religious poetry, of which the *Akathistos* hymn is a prime example.

Another literary genre, if one may so dignify it, in which one finds, if not originality, a certain spontaneity, is hagiography. While largely formulaic and replete with topoi, the Lives of the Saints often provide genuine glimpses of daily life and even of humour, not always intended.[20] These may not be, by Byzantine or modern standards, literary masterpieces, but they were, in their own way, as close to literature as most Byzantines got.[21] The transformation of such Lives into proper Greek, and the subsequent loss of the originals, by Symeon Metaphrastes can only be regretted.

---

18 R. ROMANO (ed.), *Timarione*, Naples 1974; English transl. with notes by B. BALDWIN, Detroit 1984; *Mazaris' Journey to Hades*, ed. & trans. Seminar Classics 609, Buffalo 1975.

19 Cf. G. SOYTER, *Byzantinische Dichtung*, Heidelberg 1930; R. CANTARELLA, *Poeti Bizantini*, Milan 1948; C. TRYPANIS, *Medieval and Modern Greek Poetry*, Oxford 1951; B. BALDWIN, *An Anthology of Byzantine Poetry*, Amsterdam 1985.

20 Good examples of learning about daily life from the lives of the saints are H. MAGOULIAS, "The Lives of Byzantine Saints as Sources for Data for the History of Magic in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries A.D.: Sorcery, Relics and Icons," *Byz* 37, 1967, pp. 228–269; D. ABRAHAMSE, "Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period," *ByzF* 8, 1982, pp. 3–17.

21 Two projects underway at Dumbarton Oaks may be of interest. The first is the assembling of an electronic database on medieval Greek *Saints' Lives*, which is currently concentrating on forty-four lives of ninth century saints. The second involves English translations of a number of Lives of saints. In this conection, one should not forget the pious stories, "beneficial for the soul"; John Wortley is now preparing a *Répertoire*, consisting of précis and analytical indices, of such tales. See his *Les Récits édifiants de Paul évêque de Monembasie*, Paris 1987; an expanded English translation is in press, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

A form of literary endeavour highly prized by educated Byzantines, letter writing, has only recently received attention from scholars.[22] The formal letters written by the Byzantines, which often impress us as artificial and pedantic, may actually, on closer inspection and with due regard for what they expected in them, well count as one of their finest literary achievements. It was, moreover, although they might hesitate to make the claim, the one field in which they surpassed their ancient models. The letters composed by Psellos, Tzetzes, and Kydones are more varied in form and display more feeling and literary skill than do those of Libanius, Synesius, and their contemporaries. More than sixty years ago, one of the few scholars interested in Byzantine letters, J. Sykutris, stated that, apart from religious poetry, "only in Byzantine epistolography does one find pieces which, according to absolute aesthetic standards, belong to world literature".[23]

Did the Byzantines manifest any creativity or new approaches in theology? Certainly, some of them tried. And they were quickly condemned for it. Recall the case of John Italos or the reception of Thomas Aquinas in the fourteenth century. Did the Byzantines simply hold on adamantly to the theological synthesis they inherited from the Fathers and the Councils or did they adapt or add to it in any way? They would, of course, be horrified at the question and, perhaps, it is not fair to ask it. In the present state of research it would be difficult to formulate the question properly, much less come up with a good answer; the subject requires a good deal more study.

As far as art and architecture are concerned, I leave that to the experts. Still, the fact that we recognise the categories, Byzantine Art and Byzantine Architecture, implies that these were different from the art and architecture that preceded them and from that which came after. How different and distinct is a matter for the specialists to determine.

The Byzantine people are so often presented as solemn and unchanging; we look at their stately images frozen in mosaic, and we read their pedantic imitations of classical authors. We criticise them for getting mired down in a world which had long since passed away, for not keeping up with the times and, in a sense, being stuck in a rut. We keep asking the same questions and

---

22 For example, see A. LITTLEWOOD, "An Ikon of the Soul: the Byzantine Letter," *Visible Language* 10, 1976, pp. 197–226; M. MULLET, "The Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter," *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, in M. MULLET & R. SCOTT (edd.), Birmingham 1981; G. DENNIS, "The Byzantines as Revealed in their Letters," in J. PERADOTTO & J. DUFFY (edd.), *Gonimos: Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies Presented to Leendert G. Westerink at 75*, Buffalo 1988, pp. 155–166.

23 "Probleme der byzantinische Epistolographie," *IIIe Congrès intern. des études byzantins*, Athens 1932, Compte rendu, 296.

getting more or less the same answers. What I am suggesting is that *we* may be the ones stuck in a rut. Maybe it is time to ask different questions, to look at the Byzantine people in different ways, to examine and interpret our sources with more imagination. Perhaps, instead of wondering whether the Byzantines were creative or not, we should, in studying them, be more creative ourselves, and we may come to know them better.

CHURCH HISTORY AS NON-CONFORMISM: RETRIBUTIVE AND ESCHATOLOGICAL ELEMENTS IN ATHANASIUS AND PHILOSTORGIUS

Garry Trompf / University of Sydney

No sooner had Constantine brought respite to the Christians than a new problem raised its head — the Arian controversy. As I have already demonstrated from the pages of Rufinus, orthodox historians were quite capable of representing Arianism as a scourge comparable to persecution.[1] Thus in their eyes no sooner had the impieties of pagan oppression and imperial tyranny been contained than a new ἀσέβεια reared its head — "like some great monster".[2] The man most responsible for identifying this alleged apostasy was Athanasius, Alexandria's most renowned bishop, the protagonist for orthodoxy who suffered most at the hands of the pro-Arian parties, at least four times forced into exile from his see and hunted by officials of the Emperor Constantius (II) — to Athanasius "that most irreligious (ἀσεβέστατος) Augustus".[3] There are and will remain highly contrasting ways of representing Athanasius' ecclesiastical politics; in the wake of the old debate between Trinitarians and anti-Trinitarians, most scholars defend his integrity and heroic survivalism, while a few worry about his over-defensiveness and possible dissimulations.[4] The relatively

---

1 G.W. TROMPF, "Rufinus and the Logic of Retribution in Post-Eusebian Histories," *JEH* 43/3, 1992, esp. pp. 364–367.

2 Thus ATHANASIUS, for example, *In Illud Omnia, etc.* 1; *Ad Episcopos Aegypti*, ii, 16; *Epist.* 56, 1; *Historia Arianorum ad Monachos*, i, 2; 5; iii, 19; iv, 28–29; 32; 34, etc., cf. i, 3 (for the phrase).

3 [*Epist.*] *De synodis* [*Ariminesi et Seluciana*], i, 12 (for the phrase), cf. ii, 25; iii, 55, in contrast to earlier deference, e.g., *Apol. ad Constantium*, 1; 18; *Epist. encycl.* 5. Athanasius insisted that the Arian cause involved anti-orthodox pagan elements (*ibid.*). Cf. a comparable change of tone in Hilary's career; *ad Constant.* ii, 1, 4, yet cf. *Contra Constant.* 5, 7–8, 11.

4 For the most influential scholarly defence, see W. BRIGHT, "Introduction on the life of Athanasius" in his edition of the Benedictine text of *Orations of St. Athanasius against the Arians*, Oxford 1873, pp. iff.; and, for some recent hermeneutics of suspicion, T. BARNES, "The Career of Athanasius," Lecture to the Tenth International Conference on Patristic Studies, University of Oxford, 26 Aug. 1987. The author participated in the sharp debate between "defenders and detractors" of Athanasius, after the paper of

provocative spirit in which Athanasius and Constantius approached each other's territories of "pastoral power" has also been variously assessed.[5] Whatever the shades of opinion, there can be no doubting that the great bulk of the Athanasian *opus* is polemic, direct and unrefined by rhetorical flourish, with detail piled upon detail as to why the Arians were wrong doctrinally and how they undermined the Church by their actions. At the highest pitches of his contentiousness Arians become "virtual heathens", "godless" and "taxed with atheism", "profaners of the Holy Spirit" and "partisans of the Devil", even "forerunners of the Antichrist"[6] — most of these opinions also being ascribed to, some possibly inspired by, the great Saint Antony.[7] Consequently, when Athanasius embarks on a distinctly historiographical work, that is, the *Historia Arianorum* (A.D. 358) — the only one in which he refers to himself in the third person — one can expect from him invective.[8]

The stresses, however, are on wrongdoing — on the ἀσέβεια of the Arians' false accusations, calumnies, hybris, iniquities, cruelties, and

---

the late R.P.C. Hanson ("The Behaviour of Athanasius of Alexandria") at *conf. cit.* 25 Aug. 1987.

5 Note BARNES, *Athanasius and Constantius*, Cambridge Mass. 1993, and the literature survey found therein. Cf. M. FOUCAULT, *Power and Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Writings, 1972–1977*, (ed. and trans. C. Gordon), New York 1980, on the analysis of pastoral power.

6 E.g., *Ad Episc. Aegypt.* ii, 17 (heathenism); *Epist.* 61, 5 (profaning Spirit); *De sententia Dionysii*, 27 (Devil's partisans); *Epist.* 50, cf. 10, 7 (Antichrist). Arians were likened to the Manichaeans, Sadducees, Jewish heretics or Jews in general. Yet note, however, the more studied *Contr. Apoll.* 1–64, with the authenticity of Athanasian authorship being defended by G.D. DRAGAS, "Saint Athanasius' Two Treatises 'Contra Apollinarem': second thoughts on the research of the critics," *Abba Salama* 6, 1975, pp. 84–96; idem, *St. Athanasius, Contra Apollinarem*, Church and Theology 6, Athens 1985, esp. chs. 1–4.

7 *Vit. S. Ant.* 69 (impiety, heathenism, forerunning of the Antichrist, darkness), cf. also 86, 92.

8 See also BRIGHT, "Introduction" to his edition of the Benedictine text of the *Historical Writings of St. Athanasius*, Oxford 1881, p. lxxvii on representing Arian speeches *ad invidiam*, not from documents. Note that, apart from the *Historia*, Athanasius wrote tracts containing the narration of past events, but (apart from the special case of *Vit. S. Ant.*), they are far less consciously historiographical, being more apologetical or polemical writings in which documents relevant in the Arian-Homoousion debate were explained in context and strung together chronologically, or in which Biblical and Pagan materials were considered historically for Christological argument (as in *de Incarnatione*).

outrages of violence, as well as on the tyranny of their imperial supporter[9] — rather than dwelling on instances of divine retribution. Athanasius fought for an ideological and institutional cause, but having been subject to constant accusations himself, his history is designed to set the record straight about the behaviour of the other side. It is probably of some psychological and theological significance that he does not seek to "score points" by detailing the ugly ends of his enemies. In the first part of *Historia Arianorum*, for example, which is now lost, it is not likely that he presented an account of Arius' own death, even though he notes that others have informed his readers about "the Lord's judgement" in this connection (*Epist. ad Monachos*, I, lii, 2, cf. *Hist.* vii, 51; see also below). The death of his archrival Eusebius of Nicomedia was probably not "interpreted" either,[10] and when in the remaining text of the *Historia* Athanasius comes to the passing of Gregory (the Arian bishop and a Cappadocian suddenly installed at Alexandria after the 337–338 Council of Antioch), he allows himself only the most veiled reference. The persecuting Gregory is represented as an outrageous robber of mendicants, who must "very shortly" hear those words (adopted from Matt. 25: 45), "inasmuch as you have dishonoured these, you have dishonoured me" (*Hist.* ii, 13); yet when coming to the time of the actual death Athanasius has no pointed comment to make (iii, 21, cf. *Apol. contra Arianos*, ii, 29; iii, 49). By these restraints the champion of the Homoousian cause avoids appearing to pronounce insulting judgement on the individual dead involved in ecclesial dissension (cf. *Ad. Episc. Aegypt.* 19), while in his *Apologia* against the Arians it is intriguing how he stresses that Eusebius of Nicomedia and his "Ario-madmen" stand "*self*-condemned" or, as Constantine is quoted as writing, "increase punishment (κόλασις) on their own house" (*praef.* 1; iii, 36, 37, 41; v, 62; cf, iii, 44; vi; 83).

About the secular abettors of the Arians, however, Athanasius shows no such scruples. The *Historia* was evidently meant to be a secretive document, written to keep some enquiring orthodox monks abreast of affairs yet prefaced by a letter in which he protested the work's inadequacies, requested its quick

---

9 In the *Historia* the recurrent analysis is impiety: i, 2, 5; iii, 19; iv, 28–30, 34, for example, while in the *Apol. contra Arianos* the accusations are more various — of self condemnation: i, 1; iii, 36–37; vi, 83; unfair calumny: i, 1; iii, 44, 49; v, 59, 63, 68; violence: i, 1, 15, 17; iii, 49; v, 63; violence and tyranny: iii, 37, 42; insolence: i, 3; ii, 21; meanness, malice and shamelessness: ii, 21; vi, 71, iii, 36. Cf. also *Hist.* i, 8; ii, 13; iii, 18–19, for example, and on accusations of persecution, see below.

10 Eusebius died c. 342, about six years after Arius. Eusebius' death is mentioned but not assessed in *Apol. contra Arianos*, iii, 36.

return, and prohibited any transcription (*Epist. ad. Mon.* 1: 3).[11] It is in this remarkable epistle that one finds the first known reflections of a churchman about the pitfalls of writing history — at least of the sort of polemical history such a protagonist as himself was bound to produce. "For the writings of us babblers and private persons," as he puts it ironically, "are not safe for those who come after" (3). In the midst of dissension he can see how the act of writing can produce still more conflict, perhaps even bring it back to life after the issues are long gone, when the Christian is enjoined to reconciliation. "Welcome one another in *agape*," he is quick to go on, "and all those coming to you in *eusebeia* and faith" — although in the end he is forced by the turmoil of his time and by theological partisanship towards a negative limitation: "if anyone love not the Lord, let them be anathema" (3; cf. 1 Cor. 16: 22–24).[12]

If Athanasius was sensitive about judging the ends of his theological opponents before a monastic readership, however, he does not scruple in the *Historia* about evaluating the deeds and fitting deaths of the Arians' secular abettors. Ἡ θεία δίκη does not overlook Philip the Prefect, alleged by Athanasius to be complicit with Eusebius of Nicomedia in the murderous strangulation of Paul, bishop of Constantinople. Philip soon fell from office and died in remarkable ignominy, befitting his "inhumanity, savage temper and impiety" (i, 7; cf. also *Apol. de Fuga*, 3). The same divine Justice smote Duke Balaccius, Constantius' agent of persecution at Alexandria in support of the Arian bishop Gregory. For agreeing with Gregory's request to spit upon a letter from Antony, Balaccius is bitten and hurled from his horse, later dying (*Hist.* ii, 14, cf. 12), an incident monks probably already knew well, for Antony's very letter evidently foretold wrath unless Balaccius desisted from his oppressions (*Vit. S. Ant.* 86).[13] In the

---

11 On this matter, E. FIALON, *St. Athanase; étude littéraire*, Paris 1877, pp. 196–200, still stands.

12 Significantly, Athanasius finishes with the disciplinary Pauline anathema, while Paul himself closes with an appeal to *agape*. For a more general assessment of the Athanasian "singlemindedness", see W. SCHNEEMELCHER, "Athanasius von Alexandrien als Theologe und als Kirchenpolitiker," *ZNTW* 43, 1950–51, pp. 242–56; C. KANNENGIESSER (ed.), *Politique et théologie chez Athanase d'Alexandrie* (Actes du Colloque de Chantilly, 23–25 Septembre 1973; Théologie historique 23), Paris 1975.

13 Here I take it that we have the only authentic datum connecting Antony with the anti-Arian cause, a stance Athanasius then uses to develop his picture of the saint's theological views. For critical issues, see esp. H. DÖRRIES, "Die *Vita Antonii* als Geschichtsquelle," *NGWG* 14, 1949, esp. p. 390;

Historia Athanasius himself does not hesitate to predict the untimely demise of Constantius himself, openly referring to a death coming so "very shortly"[14] that it will leave the emperor's "partridge-like" lackies bereft (iii, 32; cf. LXX Jer. 17: 11).

The pro-Arian measures of Constantius, indeed, are from the Devil — because "swords, not persuasion and counsel are used" over questions of divine truth (iv, 33), and Athanasius heaps derogatory epithet upon epithet from the Bible in a veritable anti-panegyric. Constantius is pharaonic tyrant, a Saul, an Ahab, more cruel than Pilate or Maximian, heralding if not standing as the Antichrist himself, a monarch of Sodom who receives in Athanasius' remonstrances the very opposite to Eusebian triumphalism or any "rhetoric of [a Christian] empire".[15] Constantius' attacks on his own kindred — the slaying of his uncles, the removal of his cousins, the mistreating of his father-in-law — do not go unnoticed (viii, 69), and for this kind of lawlessness, coupled with the disorders and iniquities of his persecution, only divine condemnation can issue. Athanasius decrees it openly: Constantius "has given himself up to the consuming fire of future judgement" (70). At a later time Athanasius was to express a quiet relief at the passing of the pagan Julian, and could entertain hopes of a great Christian emperor to come (*Narrat. ad Ammon.*), but in the heat of the 350s the persecutions of the Arianising ruler were cosmic and eschatological — a διωγμός "such as never arose before" (*Hist.* viii, 77). Ancient rhetors in less legally vulnerable positions were quite capable of invective — witness the Alexandrian Claudian[16] — yet Athanasius' was that of the stubborn

---

R.C. CREGG, "Introduction," to *Athanasius: the Life of Antony and the Letter to Marcellinus*, trans. & ed. R.C. CREGG, London 1980, p. 13.

14 A. ROBERTSON rightly notes the use of the phrase ὅσον οὐδέπω in presaging the deaths of both Gregory and Constantius (in P. SCHAFF & H. WACE (edd.), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, London 1891, IV, p. 281, n. 3, cf. p. 274), but we note the open usage of ἀποθνήσκοντα in iii, 32, as against ii, 13.

15 *Hist.* iv, 30, 34; v, 40; vi, 46; viii, 67–68, 71, 74–75, 77–78, 80, for example; cf. later, *De synod.* ii, 31 on Constantius persisting with his *asebeia* beyond his death-bed baptism. Cf. A. CAMERON, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Sather Classical Lectures 55), Berkeley 1991.

16 To come, in his *In Rufinum*, 1–2 and *De consul. Stilich.* 1–3 (390s); cf. H.L. LEVY, "Themes of Encomium and Invective in Claudian," *TP* 89, 1958, pp. 338–341. Note also LIBANIUS, for example *Vita*, 71; *Orat.* 24, 51; THEMISTIUS, *Pro Julian.* [not extant], and on the rhetorically powerful Gregory Nazianzus, nn. 24, 30 below; cf. R. ASMUS, "Die Invektiven des Gregorius von Nazianz im Lichte der Werke des Kaisers Julian," *ZKirch* 31, 1910, pp. 325–367. On invectives in earlier imperial times, for example

nonconformist believing his recalcitrance would make a difference in a putatively Christian empire (cf. iii, 21).[17] And he was, after all, the victim of an uncalled-for legal vulnerability, since Constantius had abolished the old judicial formulary process in 342 and appointed imperial administrative officers, like procurators, to rule directly on procedural matters and do his bidding[18] — as if this were not enough to bring on the harassed bishop's anti-imperial accusations and projections of a new tyranny!

These vehemently anti-Constantian conclusions, however, were too far-reaching for either public consumption or posterity, and the monks were to read them only and take no copy. "Publishing" the tract, in any case, meant courting death. At some time during Egypt's still more turbulent years in the late 360s, however, when the aging Athanasius had to contend with both the apostatising Julian and the re-Arianising Valens, it would seem that the *Historia* was made ready for accessibility. As all ancient manuscripts testify, someone prefixed to it two letters — one to Serapion of Thmuis, and the other the original prefatorial and inhibitory epistle to the monks. Serapion, one suspects, took the liberty of bringing these related writings together for future circulation. Perhaps it was a matter of keeping his house in order (dying c. 365, five years before Athanasius did in 373); but as his hero's faithful suffragan (cf. *Ad Serap. orat.* 4) it was more likely that Serapion saw logomachic potential in Athanasius' undisclosed opinions — for shoring up orthodox defences when the theological wrangling was prolonged.[19] (Julian, after all, made bones about both his opposition to Athanasius and a contrasting admiration for Constantius — his uncle! — while in 367 the Arian Lucius took advantage of Valens' policies and the last Athanasian exile

---

QUINTILLIAN, *Declamat.*, cf. *Inst. orat.* 2, 4–6. I thank Professor John Vanderspoel for drawing attention to questions of genre; cf. also C. STEAD, "Rhetorical Method in Athanasius," *VigChr* 30, 1976, pp. 121–137.

17 Cf. R. KLEIN, "Zur Glaubwürdigkeit historischer Aussagen des Bischofs Athanasius von Alexandria über die Relkigionspolitik des Kaisers Constantius II," *StP* 17/3, 1982, pp. 996–1017 (for an author trying to rehabilitate Constantius; see also his *Constantius II und die christliche Kirche*, Darmstadt 1977).

18 Note *Codex Iustinianus*, 2, 57, 1; cf. also M.A. TILLEY, "Dilatory Donatists or Procrastinating Catholics: the trial at the conference of Carthage," *ChHist* 60/1, 1991, pp. 10–11, for particular background; C. VOGLER, *Constance II et de l'adminstration impériale*, Groupe de Recherche de l'Histoire Romaine de l'Université des Sciences Humaines de Strasbourg: études et travaux 3, Strasbourg 1979, more generally.

19 Thus these letters accompanying the *Historia* survived, unlike many others. Cf. J. QUASTEN, *Patrology*, Utrecht and Westminister Ma. 1960, III, p. 52.

to claim the bishopric of Alexandria.)[20] Now it is in the important letter sent to Serapion himself (c. 358–59) that Athanasius lets out his private reflections about the death of Arius. He "long debated with himself" about discussing the subject, lest it appear he was "exulting in the death of that man" (*Epist.* 54, *ad Serap.* 1). Yet he comes to stress what an extraordinary circumstance (*paradoxos*) it was that Arius died while exerting his bowels in a Constantinopolitan toilet (3). Arius had sworn before the emperor Constantine that he did not hold the opinions Alexander, bishop of Constantinople, had excommunicated him for espousing. On dismissing Arius, Constantine charged him: "if your faith be impious, God will judge you according to your oath" (2; cf. *Ad Episc. Aegypt.* ii, 19), and before Arius could re-enter into communion with the orthodox, at a service to be held the following day, he fell "headlong" and "burst asunder", his expiring thus being paralleled with the awesome end of Judas (in Acts 1: 18 rather than Matt. 27: 5) (*Serap.* 3). Arius may have secured support from the emperor, Athanasius recognises, perhaps from "all mankind", but not from the Church. Alexander prayed in utter distress for the avoidance of the forthcoming communion, offering his own death to God instead of it, and "none other than the Lord himself" decisively intervened. Thus God "transcended human judgements" by his own act of judgement, which, Athanasius stresses, was a total embarrassment to Eusebius of Nicomedia as well as others behind Arius, and an obvious condemnation of the Arian heresy in general (3–4).

Such is what we may call "the Athanasian temperament" in the interpretation of the past: undeviating and abrasive, zealous for the Church and the truth over State and human jurisdictions, embroiled in controversy and passionate for a cause, and thus quite unable to avoid writing prejudiced history. At least there is self-knowledge enough for the bishop to voice his reticence; and that is significant. Yet what Athanasius did not want bequeathed to posterity, posterity received — in time. We do not know precisely when the *Historia* and its accompanying letters first came into the hands of those taking up the task of Eusebian-like ecclesiastical history. In any case the anti-Arian sting is evident in most of Athanasius' initially publicised writings. To the unstopped troublesomeness of the patriarch we find the emperor Julian reacting with his own reappropriations of pagan retributive logic. How can the Alexandrians remain so influenced by this controversialist for "the Galileans", when the Egyptians should rightfully

---

20 For Julian, [Anon.], *Historia acephala*, vii, 10–11; cf. JULIAN's own *Paneg. ad Constant.* and *De monarch.* For Lucius, *Hist. aceph.* ix, 14; xiii, 18; cf. RUFINUS, *Hist. eccles.* xi, 3–4.

enslave and not be enslaved by the Hebrews? Only turn back to your "ancient laws", he appealed to Alexandria's populace, "when there was communion with the gods, and as a result we enjoyed many blessings".[21]

Julian, strangely enough, who was well equipped to identify appropriate divine punishments and historical *exempla* for political advantage,[22] did not himself have to put up with much historically argued Christian invective during his reign (esp. 361–363). An imperial apostate could easily have been cast as the Antichrist, of course, whom Constantius or even Arianism as such[23] had heralded, but the Athanasian *Historia* was not available for inspiration. Few clerics were as brave as Basil, once Julian's fellow-student at Athens, in accusing the emperor of exalting himself "above all human nature" and "insulting God's church", or as the blind old monk and bishop Maris of Chalcedon, in challenging him with a face-to-face curse.[24] Gauging reactions to Julian across the board both Christian parties might seem to have "closed their ranks before the common enemy".[25] Actually writing about any retributions Julian and his supporters merited, on other hand, was a recognisably risky business. Nazianzus exploded on paper with intemperate evocations of divine hatred, only to see the unwisdom of publicising them;[26]

---

21 *Epist.* 51 (Herthein's ordering) = 111 (Bidez-Cumont). On Julian's sense of divine providence, see P. ATHANASSIADI-FOWDEN, *Julian and Hellenism*, Oxford 1981, esp. p. 122.

22 For a *locus classicus*, see *Paneg. ad Constant.* [para. 16, 22] (ed. W.C. WRIGHT, pp. 46, 66–68), and for some general background, W.E. KAEGI, "The Emperor Julian's Assessment of the Significance and Function of History," *TP* 108, 1964, pp. 31–34.

23 Cf. ATHANASIUS, *Apol. contra Arianos*, vi, 90.

24 Thus BASIL, *Epist.* 41, 1; cf. Gregory NAZIANZUS, *Orat.* iv; *Epist.* 39–41 on their relations at Athens. On the curse oracle of Maris, SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* iii, 12. See also, on Babylas of Antioch, John CHRYSOSTOM, *Serm.* (PG 50, 527–572); PHILOSTORGIUS, *Hist. eccles.* vii, 8; SUIDAS [Lexicon], s.v. "Babylas".

25 Thus H.M. GWATKIN, *The Arian Controversy*, Epochs in Church History, London 1889, p. 111. Many clergy were exiled, however, for "not abandoning their faith" (thus PHILOSTORGIUS, *Hist. eccles.* viii, 5; SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* iii, 15–6; SOZOMEN, *Hist. eccles.* v, 5, 9–11 for example), and we know that a pro-Christian mob (apparently combined Arian and Homoousian elements) rioted against Julian; cf. G. DOWNEY, "Julian the Apostate at Antioch," *ChHist* 8, 1939, pp. 307–315. Some also tried to persuade Julian from apostasy during Constantius' reign, for example, Aetius, following PHILOSTORGIUS, *Hist. eccles.* iii, 27.

26 Even then Gregory's two savage invectives against Julian (*Orat.* 4–5 (= *Contra Julian.* 1–2; PG 35, 531–564, 663–720) were probably composed soon after the former's death; they evidently reflect his repression of anger

while Philip Sidetes' apology against Julian, let alone Cyril of Alexandria's vitriolic *Contra Julianum*, were exercises safely *post facta*, appearing almost a generation after the whole anomalous apostasy — ostensibly to counter its residual effects.[27] There was great relief, indeed glorying, over Julian's surprise death at 363,[28] but soon after that most clerical attention was back with internal conflicts.

Paganism still had its doughty intellectuals to contend with, of course, and perhaps it was no waste of time to pen works against Julian long after his demise. After all, one of his favourites, the great rhetor Libanius (who considered the emperor's death one of those sad, surprising acts of *Tyche*), was quite capable of sustaining the older-style hermeneutics of events as a foil to the new one(s). Sounding almost Athanasian, certainly nonconformist at the time, he declaims the corruption of two governors sent by Theodosius I's administration to Antioch (where he was teaching in the 380s). Confident in his prayers to Zeus, he glories that he received *dike* (as a justified revenge) in both cases, when the officials, who caused him trouble, met their downfalls (*Vita*, 269–270).[29] Such principles and confidence, however, were being constantly appropriated and directed away from Hellenistic traditionalisms towards a "Christian understanding" (however much it was itself affected by Hellenistic preconceptions, let alone rendered problematic by the new doctrinal discord). In the cultural competition, significantly, Christian thinkers could draw on both the Biblical and Graeco-Latin repositories to fuel their interpretative engines. Nazianzus, for example, not only drew on Hellenistic resources in his rage against Julian, impugning

---

during the reign and were spurted out with such bitterness that they were never delivered. Along with Gregory's sporadic applications of retributive logic historically, note also John CHRYSOSTOM, *Orat.* v, 11 (PG 26, 900) on Julian foiled over the temple; and also [Anon.], *Chron. Paschal.* 363, pp. 548–549, trans. M. & M. WHITBY, Translated Texts for Historians, Liverpool 1989, p. 39, reflecting an earlier (late fourth century) source covering the punishments befalling clerical defectors to Julian (cf. also n. 57 below).

27 On Philip, SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* vii, 27; cf. CYRIL, *Contra Julian.* [Students should note that Augustine's work under the same name is not against the emperor Julian but Pelagius].

28 See ATHANASIUS himself, *Narratio ad Ammonium*; the poet Callistus, *apud* SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* iii, 21. Cf. also TROMPF, "Rufinus and the Logic of Retribution," p. 357 on Ephrem the Syrian.

29 Cf. 127, 133 (Libanius' relations with Julian/Julian's death). We must take it that Libanius places only the act of *starting* to write his autobiography in his 60th year (in 374) (see 51), because many events after then are covered by this work.

him with impiety and tyranny, alleging him to bring δίκη against Rome, and knowing he was reaping "fitting punishments" (κολασταὶ τῆς ἀξίας) for his "atrocious criminality", but he also invoked Biblical archetypes, Julian being a Sennacherib, a Nebuchadnezzar, let alone a worse persecutor than Diocletian, and thus one of those kings worthy of God's judgement for "unholy sheddings of blood".[30]

As the writing of ecclesiastical history continued, the upshots of events in the Arian-orthodox controversy became points of argument. In the 390s, for instance, it was most important for the (anonymous, pro-Homoousian and Alexandrian) author of the *Historia acephala* to show how the heroic Athanasius was not effectively succeeded by the Arian Lucius, who was driven from the city by a mob (xiii, 18).[31] Rufinus, returning from the east to Aquileia in 398, brought a much more vivid and pejorative picture of what he describes as Lucius' persecution against virgins and monks, seeming to take on some Athanasian fire for trying to make these perfidies worse than those remembered of Gentile persecutors (*Hist. eccles.* xi, 3–4, 6–7). Rufinus, however, as I have shown elsewhere, makes no interpretative comments about the deaths of either Julian or Lucius (even though in his account Julian's attempt to rebuild the temple dramatically failed, and Arianism eventually collapses under Theodosius I).[32] Rufinus is more concerned to contrast the heroic adventures of the righteous Athanasius — which he recounts with alacrity (x, 16–19, 33–34) — with the bad deeds of his opponents. And for Rufinus it is the awesome death of Arius that sits as the stark antithesis to Athanasius' peaceful passing (x, 13; xi, 3). Interestingly, the version of Arius' end quietly revealed by Athanasius himself to Serapion does not seem to be known to the Latin (its circulation probably still being limited); Rufinus only knows the story of the alleged perjury — and how Constantine marvelled at Arius' sudden death after the

---

30 *Orat.* 18, *De mortib. patr.*, 32 (impiety); *Orat.* 5, *Contra Julian.* 37); *Orat.* 21, *Laud. Athan.* 33 (*dike*); Orat. 5, *Contra Julian.* 36 (= PG 35, 712, for Greek phrase); Orat. 4, *Contra Julian.* 110, 96 (Sennacherib; Diocletian, and so on); *Orat.* 42, *Valed.* 3 (Nebuchadnezzar, God's judgement, and so on).

31 This history is in the "chronicling", objective-looking style, yet its preoccupation at the end with Lucius is obviously pointed. On the death of Gregory, Arian bishop of Alexandria before Lucius, Athanasius is purely clerical (*Fest. ind.* xviii), even concessive at *Hist. Arian.* iii, 21.

32 TROMPF, "Rufinus and the Logic of Retribution," pp. 365, 367. In RUFINUS at xi, 8 there is the suggestion that prodigies during the Lucian persecution, along with the paradigms of holiness, make for a different future.

heretic had made a (false) oath before him (cf. Athanasius, *Ad. Episc. Aegypt.* ii, 19).

During the period of the Theodosian "Establishment", we are thus now showing, Christian historians came to represent and interpret events to legitimate orthodoxy and reveal how God had turned against the Arian heretics, without the biting acuity and apocalyptic critique of Athanasius resurfacing. From the turn into the fifth century there were of course various Eastern authors interested in questions of divine rewards and punishments, and the disputative temperament was clearly not lost among them. John Chrysostom, for one important example, the unwilling and controversialist patriarch of Constantinople (398–404), documented the "proofs" in the Bible that showed how all the scandals befalling the righteous, even the Cross itself, were but temporary, while the story of the "tyranny" of Herod (Antipas), who beheaded John the Baptist, lived on in its retelling and was disseminated as opprobrium as far as "the lands of the Persians, Indians and Mauritanians" (*De provid.* xxii, 6–9). One justifiably suspects of this tract on Providence that Chrysostom has subtly likened the queen Herodias, who requested John's head on a platter (Mk. 6: 17–25) to the Arian-supporting (and by implication disgrace-deserving) empress Eudoxia, wifc of the Arcadius (emp. 383–408), and for this, along with other pieces of innuendo against her, the bishop was eventually exiled.[33] As for historiographers of that time, we learn about an anonymous Arian chronicler, Sabinus of Heraclea, often and probably wrongly seen as a member of the semi-Arian or "Macedonian" party; Gelasius of Caesarea, who *inter alia* translated Rufinus' *Historia* into Greek; Hesychius of Jerusalem, Biblical commentator and anti-Nestorian; and about Philip(pus) Sidetes, who was evidently the first man to attempt a "Christian" rather than a distinctly "ecclesiastical" history, his important twenty-four volume work having been lost. About this remarkable Philip we learn that he commented on the deaths of the persecutors (including Licinius), and that he made sporadic attacks against the patriarchs of Constantinople Sisinnus (426–27) and Proclus (434?–46) comparable to Chrysostom's against his archrival Theophilus (385–412) (the ambitious patriarch of Alexandria bent on exterminating Origen's theological influence).[34] Of the techniques by which Philip and these other historians instanced divine requitals, however, we have no knowledge.

---

33 *De provid.* xxii, and see *In decollationem praecursoris et baptistae Joannis* (PG 54, 485) for the Herodias-Eudoxia connection made plainer; cf. PALLADIUS, *Dialog.* 3-9 (PG 47, 11–30), on biographical details.

34 On Sabinus, see W.A. LÖHR, "Sabinus of Heraclea: a Re-assessment of the Scope and Tendency of his Work," Paper delivered to the Tenth

For the second decade of the reign of Theodosius II (eastern emp. 408–450) matters are different. The Eusebian enterprise is taken up in rather unlikely quarters for the time, by an Arian scholar, Philostorgius of Borissus (Cappadocia), whose invective spirit comes to match what we have seen in the Athanasian narratives, in fact whose work (written in Constantinople not long after 425)[35] was the last great intellectual effort to subvert the Homoousian cause and retrieve Arianism's lost ground. To clarify a technical point before it is too late, though, Philostorgius' was a particular brand of Arianism, that of the Anomoean or "neo-Arian" party.[36] By hindsight his might have been a theological position capable of *rapprochement* with orthodoxy, yet he took a wilfully nonconformist stance nonetheless.

Philostorgius (c. 368 – c. 439) is the first of the four best known post-Eusebian ecclesiastical historians of the Greek east — Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret being the other (and orthodox) three. From what has been preserved of Philostorgius' work (most surviving parts of which were culled

---

International Conference on Patristic Studies, 28 Aug. 1987; on Gelasius of Caesarea, esp. A. GLAS, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia*, Leipzig 1914 (yet discounting his view that it was Gelasius, not Rufinus, who continued Eusebius' history); for Hesychius, cf. his *Hist. eccles.* (Latin trans. in J.D. MANSI (ed.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Paris & Leipzig 1901, IX, pp. 248–49), cf. J. QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 495; on Philip, esp. SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* vii, 26–27; cf. C. de BOOR, *Neue Fragmente des Papias, Hegesippus und Pierus in bisher unbekannten Exzerpten aus der Kirchengeschichte des Philippus Sidetes*, Texte und Untersuchungen 5/2, Berlin 1888, p. 184; cf. J. BIDEZ, "Fragments nouveaux de Philostorge," *Byzantion* 10, 1935, p. 433 n. 34. For other "hidden" sources, see below nn. 41, 46, and THEOPHANES Confessor, *Chronographia*, ed. de BOOR, Leipzig 1883–85, I, p. 11. Philip's work seems to be history in the sense of polymathy (including genealogies, geographical and zoological observations), an approach first sponsored by CLEMENT of ALEXANDRIA, *Stromateis*, 1, 21–23; cf. also R. MORTLEY, "The Hellenistic Foundations of Ecclesiastical Historiography," in G. CLARKE (ed.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, Sydney & Oxford 1990, pp. 243–247. As for Chrysostom's struggle with Theophilus, it was curious considering the former's defence of a more literalist and less figurative approach to Biblical hermeneutics.

35 Some, for example, QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 531, concede the possibility of as late a date as 433.

36 On Eunomius, Aetius and the neo-Arians, see R.P.C. HANSON, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God; the Arian Controversy 318–381*, Edinburgh 1988, ch. 19. Cf., for reference to Eunomianism in historiography prior to Philostorgius, RUFINUS, *Hist. eccles.* x, 25.

by the bibliophile Photius),[37] one quickly senses how crucial retributive principles are for his hermeneutics. In his preface,[38] significantly, he looks back to the time when the Jews were persecuted by the Greeks (presumably seeing some parallel with contemporary Arianism in the political wilderness). Pointedly, he praises the anonymous author of 1 Maccabees because "the events he narrates are found to correspond exactly with the prophecies of Daniel", and because he succeeds in explaining how "evil deeds of men" (ἀνδρῶν μοχθηρία) plunged Jewry "into the lowest depths", while "the valour of others retrieved it again" (i, 1).[39] He is not being a Porphyry here, I venture to say (that is, concerned to argue that Daniel is a much later document that one might suppose and written in the context of the Maccabean revolt),[40] but rather viewing the recovery of the Jews in an apocalyptic light, as the fulfilment of Danielic visions, precisely because he wants to depict the awful rise of the Homoousian error as a kind of cosmic catastrophe — in advance of God's better things to come.

The church history of Philostorgius, indeed, apparently gathers some eschatological momentum as it proceeds — as if it may have been designed to be a foil to Athanasius' (at last more widely circulated?) *Historia contra Arianorum*. While he concedes that Constantine was converted to Christianity by a heavenly sign of the cross before his battle against Maxentius (*Hist. eccles.* i, 6; Suidas 2285: iv), he claims that the emperor was poisoned by his brothers as "the atonement" or "justice" (*dike*) required

---

37 W.T. TREADGOLD, *The Nature of the Bibliotheca of Photius*, Washington DC 1980, pp. 39, 42, 53, 98.

38 Here I take it that Photius has not arbitrarily chosen to report on Philostorgius' work for the period between Constantine the Great and Theodosius II only, but that the Arians' history was confined to this span, the references to the Books of the Maccabees forming part of a preface.

39 By implication the Homoousians have temporarily undone the truth (the Arian cause), just as the Greeks suppressed the Jews, but truth eventually will prevail as it did under the Maccabees. Gregory Nazianzus had already paralleled the Maccabeans to the (orthodox) Christians (in his *In Machab. laud.* [PG 35, 911–934]; cf. JEROME, *De viris illustr.* 117); John CHRYSOSTOM, *In sanct. Macc.* (PG 50, 617ff.); and here Philostorgius turns the *exemplum* in the Arians' favour. That Philostorgius read Nazianzus and honoured his learning, see *Hist. eccles.* viii, 11; Frag. [1], a surprising datum since the Cappadocians attacked Eunomian views; cf. M. SIMONETTI, *La crisi Ariana nel IV secolo*, Studia Ephemeridis "Augustinianum" 2, Rome 1975, pp. 462–468.

40 PORPHYRY, Κατὰ χριστιανῶν (Frags.), discussed in TROMPF, "When was the First Millenarian Movement?" in the E.J. Sharpe Festschrift, ed. A. SHARMA (forthcoming); and see n. 64 (with text) below.

for putting his son Crispus to death (ii, 4).[41] If Philostorgius did not write clearly of a *divine* retribution in this connection, it was because he wanted to highlight the providential role of the Arian Eusebius of Nicomedia at the time of Constantine's death. Suffering from the poison, Constantine instructed the testament he drew up to be given by Eusebius to the first of his sons who arrived — this being Constantius, who is taken to be a true executor of his father's will (ii, 16).[42] Whereas the orthodox Constans is claimed to be behind the death of his brother Constantine the younger (iii, 1), Constantius is worthy as church builder, and as negotiator in successful missionary work among the Sabaeans (Yemenites), Ethiopians and others to the east (iii, 2, 4–6).[43]

Like Constantine, Constantius comes to gain victory over a tyrant-usurper — Magnentius — "on which occasion the sign of the cross appeared to the emperor" as it had with his father, whereas the usurper died at his own hand (iii, 26). More weight is apparently given to the efforts of Constantius'

---

41 Aurelius VICTOR, *Caes.* 41, and Ammianus MARCELLINUS, *Rer. gest.*, xiv, 6, along with PHILOSTORGIUS (again at ii, 4) — and ZOSIMUS, *Hist. nov.* ii, 29 much later — state that Constantine put Fausta to death, while SOZOMEN, *Hist. eccles.* i, 5 and EVAGRIUS *Hist. eccles.* iv, 37 deny these allegations altogether. OROSIUS, *Hist. adv. Pagan.* vii, 28, apparently following Aurelius, writes of the "unknown reasons" for Constantine's execution of Crispus, but admits it; yet so did early chronographic sources from Byzantium. On the death of Crispus Philostorgius is probably following an official source favourable to Constantius' interests behind *Chron. Pasch.* 325, p. 525 (WHITBY, p. 13); cf. also ZONARAS, *Epit.* xiii, 2. Philostorgius does not go so far as to claim that Constantine also killed another wife, however, an allegation made long ago by Edward Gibbon from a misreading (*Decline and Fall*, Everyman's edition, II, p. 142n); neither does the Arian refer to many other people being killed (as in EUTROPIUS, *Brev.* x, 6 [4]; SIDONIUS, *Epist.* v, 8, both probably unfair commentators here, as even Fausta's death is more likely to have been a suicide; see T. BARNES, *Constantine and Eusebius*, Cambridge Mass. 1981, pp. 220–221 for the evidence). For the Suidas passage cited, see BIDEZ, "Fragments nouveaux," pp. 424–425; and note Philostorgius' reference to another vision by Constantine at ii, 9.

42 At least by strong implication, we learn even from orthodox sources that Constantine was baptised at his deathbed by the Arian Eusebius of Nicomedia; for example, SOZOMEN, *Hist. eccles.* i, 34; THEODORET, *Hist. eccles.* i, 30.

43 Philostorgius' emphasis on Arian missionary work, in fact, begins with Eusebius of Nicomedia, who (with others) ordains Urphilas the Cappadocian to work among the Goths (ii, 5). On orthodox historiographical reactions to his missionary history, see TROMPF, "Tripartite Church History," *Phronema* (forthcoming).

administration to counter Persian interference, moreover, than to those of Constantine (ii, 23, 25, 28),[44] while the former's appointment of Julian to the purple is implicitly excused as a necessary means to solve problems surrounding the ambitious Gallus, whose success against Persia goes to his head. Constantius did not want his cousin Gallus harmed, and against his desire the latter was murdered, Julian's first act as Caesar being to execute his "iniquitous" killer (iv, 1–2) (Gallus being his half-brother). In this defence of the pro-Arian emperor and in the relation of these imperial affairs, Philostorgius evidently drew on chronicle sources at Constantinople that had already acclaimed Constantius as taking "great care of the churches", sighting "the precious Cross" just before defeating Magnentius, and standing as the emperor under whom the Persian Sapor II had desisted at Nisibis (after he also received a divine vision as a warning).[45] We need not infer, though, that the Eunomian historian was relying on any distinctly Arianising source before him (and one which we might suppose is best detected behind the seventh century *Chronicon Paschale*); he was simply adapting for his own polemical purposes early official (pro-ecclesial) chronicling from the emergent imperial capital that under normal circumstances at court was likely to do the bidding and pronounce in favour of any putatively Christian Caesar of "New Rome".[46]

---

44 *Om.* Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret (cf. *Hist. eccles.* iii, 1) — although note the agreement between Theodoret (ii, 16) and Philostorgius over the rôle of bishop James at Nisibis. For comparatively more stress on Constantine's dealing with Sapor II by orthodox historians, see TROMPF, "Rufinus and the Logic of Retribution," pp. 352–358.

45 *Chron. Pasch.* 350, p. 539 (p. 30); 351, p. 540 (p. 31) (quotations); cf. 350, pp. 535–39 (pp. 26–28). In fact, Constantius' civil war with Magnentius proved disastrous for the empire, allowing Franks and Alemanni to flock into Gaul. For alternative Pagan assessments of his reign, see Ammianus MARCELLINUS, *Rer. Gest.* XVI, xii, 68–70; xiv, 10; xxi, 16; ZOSIMUS, *Hist. nov.* ii, 44–6, iii, 1–2, 5, 8; cf. also TROMPF, "Tripartite Church History," on orthodox ecclesiastical historians' assessments.

46 The source behind *Chron. Pasch.* 330-63 goes as far as Jovian, and is significantly antipathetical to Julian as apostate (at 362–363, esp. p. 546). The same source appears to lie behind THEOPHANES' *Chronographia* and other Byzantine records; see M. & M. WHITBY, "Introduction," to *Chron. Pasch.* pp. xv–xvii; and cf. ZONARAS, *Epit.* xiii, 9–10 for signs of Philostorgius' official source on Gallus; cf. AMMIANUS, *Rer. Gest.* XV, i–iii. On the importance of emergent Constantinople, PHILOSTORGIUS, ii, 9; iii, 2; *Chron. Pasch.* 330, p. 529 (p. 17); 357, p. 542 (p. 33); cf. also W. HAMMER, "The Concept of the New or Second Rome in the Middle Ages," *SJMS* 19, 1944, pp. 51–52.

And what of the Arian controversy? On the Philostorgian reading, Constantius is obviously justified in expelling Athanasius (iii, 3). For, Athanasius is considered guilty of a double crime — first, in undergoing an illegal ordination (which came about through some implicitly evil power (βία) impelling two Egyptian bishops to ordain him rather than Eusebius of Nicomedia!) against their will,[47] and second, making a false accusation at the Synod of Tyre that Eusebius had somehow gotten a harlot pregnant (esp. ii, 11). The Athanasian defence of the Homoousian error, moreover, is treated as a spiritual pollution. When Constantius allows Athanasius to return to Alexandria (345), to avoid falling out with his brother Constans in the west, Aetius the (apparently wavering) bishop of Jerusalem falls under the Homoousian spell, only to receive the penalty (*dike*) for his sin — a worm-producing disease in his genitals (iii, 12). Realising his error (though never evidently escaping the effects of his illness), Aetius defected from the Homoousians and formed the faction that was to inspire the other heroic Anomoean — Eunomius (14, 17, 20). By contrast, the emperor Constans was deservedly killed by the *tyrannos* Magnentius because of his zeal for Athanasius (22).[48] Photius, however, whom we must constantly remind ourselves is the selector of materials from this intellectually "insurgent", non-conforming history under discussion, does not pass on anything that Philostorgius says about the death of Athanasius himself, and probably intentionally so. Where we would be expecting reference to it, there are the tell-tale comments on God's punishment of Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian magicians who came to typify heretical opponents of truth in Jewish and Christian circles (ix, 2).[49] One suspects Athanasius has been paralleled to this archetype.

---

47 The suggestion that Eusebius of Nicomedia was meant for the see of Alexandria is highly polemical because obviously mistaken, yet cf. THEODORET, *Hist. eccles.* i, 19 reproducing this error. The figure of two is also a politically-motivated figure: following the Nicaean canons three rather than two bishops had to be present at an ordination (*can.* 12). SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* ii, 17 writes of six or seven bishops being directly involved at an assembly 54-strong.

48 Photius is cryptic in reporting Philostorgius here, and makes no specific appeal to just deserts, but I see no other interpretation possible, since it is absurd to infer that Magnentius acted as he did because Constans had supported Athanasius. Cf. *Kleine PWK.*, III, cols. 882–883.

49 For background, Exod. 7: 11–12, 22; 2 Tim. 3: 8; PLINY, *Hist. nat.* XXX, ii, 11; APULEIUS, *Apol.* ii, 90; NUMENIUS, *apud* ORIGEN, *Contra Cels.* iv, 51; CYPRIAN, *De unit. eccles.* 16; EUSEBIUS, *Praep. Evang.*, ix, 8.

In blatant contrast, Philostorgius' Arian heroes are virtually "canonised by re-visioned history". The peculiar nature of his orientation, however, needs appraisal. He praises Arius for initiating the theological movement qualifying the Divinity of the Son, but only to criticise him for getting many other things wrong (ii, 3; x, 2–3); and considering how quickly Rufinus' two books were translated into Greek (by 402),[50] it is surprising that we hear not a word about Lucius or the post-Athanasian Arian cause in Egypt. The Arians Philostorgius arraigns are more decidedly closer to his own regional interests, with Basil of Ancyra (a moderate to be distinguished from the orthodox Basil "the Great") being singled out as a scourge against the historian's Anomoean favourites (v, 4). Admittedly there are some more generally pro-Arian sentiments. Philostorgius obviously takes it as a marvellous prophecy that Secundus of Ptolemais, in his account the only one of two bishops not to sign the Nicene declaration, predicted how Eusebius of Nicomedia — significantly dubbed in this context "the Great" — should shortly join him in exile (i, 9–10). But it is the Anomoeans or Eunomians (not the Homoians or any other Arian partisans) who are heroicised in this ecclesiastical history (cf. n. 53): Aetius, Eunomius and Leontius are all credited with "miraculous works" (ὑπερφυῆ ἔργα) (ix, 1). Aetius experiences a divine vision endowing him with greater wisdom (iii, 15; cf. also Frag. [4]), the only other comparable revelations in the extant text being granted to the crucial emperors Constantine and Constantius (thus above). As for the great gifts of Eunomius, we learn that Apollinaris of Laodicea (the controversial Cappadocian denying that Christ possessed the same psychic properties as humans) was so struck with remorse by the neo-Arians' masterful dialectics that he died (viii, 12; cf. also x, 6), an end paralleling that of Aphthonius the Manichaean, whom Aetius had "dumbfounded to death" on an earlier occasion (iii, 10).[51] Theophilus the Indian, another

---

50 Following F. DIEKAMP, "Gelasius von Caesarea in Palaestina," *OrChrAn* 117, 1938, p. 38; F.X. MURPHY, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411): His Life and Works*, The Catholic University of American Studies in Medieval History, n.s. 6, Washington D.C., pp. 162–163. See also below.

51 On serious contests with words, miracles and other signs in Patristic times (and an increasing stress by the orthodox on actions rather than deceptive verbiage), see R. LIM, "By Word or by Deed? Public Disputation as a Mode of Religious Persuasion in Late Antiquity," in M.P.J. DILLON (ed.), *Religion in the Ancient World*, Amsterdam 1995. Note that SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* ii, 35; iv, 7, deliberately reacts against the Philostorgian accolades by denigrating the neo-Arian leaders' rhetorical skills; cf. also P. ALLEN, "Some Aspects of Hellenism in Early Greek Church Historians," *Traditio* 43, 1987, pp. 371–372.

Anomoean, is claimed to have supernaturally healed the empress Eusebia (wife of Constantius), and even raised a certain Jewess from the dead (iv, 7; Frag. [7]).

Even under oppression, Arianism is helped by divine intervention. An earthquake hits Nicomedia before a synod can confirm the false Homoousian position, for one example, and makes possible the Arian (albeit Homoiousian)[52] creed at Rimini (iv, 10). When exiled to Pisidia, for another case, Aetius appeased God and averted a pestilence, thus earning barbarian respect (v, 2). In the extant account, all mention of the Council of Sirmium (357) — at which the Anomoean position was ratified — is strangely omitted (cf. iv, 8), but Philostorgius has it that, just before the emperor's death (361), and despite news of Julian's rebellion, Constantius rushed to organise a synod that would put the Anomoean case, or "examine the doctrine", as Photius misleadingly puts it, "declaring the Son to be of a different being (οὐσία) from the Father" (vii, 5).[53] Here Philostorgius seeks to save Constantius from opprobrium, having him make a last wise move, since his disgraceful retreat under the Persians towards the end of his generally victorious reign had already been put down to two causes: the "staining of his hands" in the blood of his kin,[54] and the following of the

---

52 Clarifying for non-theologians, this is not to be confused with the Homoian view. The Homoiousian position takes the Father and the Son to be of "like being", and mediates much more between orthodoxy and Arianism than does the Homoian stance that the Father and Son are "alike". For details, see, for example, A. GRILLMEIER, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, trans. J. S. BOWDEN, 1965, I, pp. 207, 251; HANSON, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, pp. 324–325.

53 The Anomoean or "neo-Arian" position, in fact, was posited on the pressing need of Aetius and his supporters to *deny* the Homoian view that the Father was *like* the Son. It looks more radical and to the orthodox decisively "blasphemous" — an epithet used for the decisions at Sirmium — but actually its adherents conceived themselves to be retreating back from the Homoian view that had gone too far. In this chapter, therefore, I eschew reference to them as "radical" or "extreme" Arians. For other reconsiderations, esp. M. WILES, "Eunomius: Hair-splitting Dialectician or Defender of the Accessibility of Salvation?," in R.D. WILLIAMS (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy*, Henry Chadwick Festschrift, Cambridge 1989, pp. 157–172, yet cf. T.A. KOPECEK, "Neo-Arian Religion: the Evidence of the *Apostolic Constitutions*," in R.C. GREGG (ed.), *Arianism: Historical and Theological Reassessments*, Papers from the Ninth International Conference on Patristic Studies, September 5–10, 1983 (Oxford), Philadelphia 1985 pp. 170–172.

moderate Basil of Ancyra's advice to banish Theophilus the Indian, Aetius, and another neo-Arian bishop called Serras (v, 4).

As for Julian, the reprobate then emerges as the worst culprit of them all in the Philostorgian story. After his welcome removal from the scene, the historian conveys a sense of high hope for the radical Arian cause, and by the death of Valens, which is expectedly treated sympathetically in the narrative, Eunomius and his neo-Arian episcopal company are ready to regulate (καταστησόμεναι) the entire state of affairs in the East from Antioch (ix 18).[55] The succeeding Homoousian emperors, however, then make for new difficulties; and one gains the impression that the real truth is going to have to outlive the misguided leadership of Gratian and the two Theodosii before it is fittingly (even finally or eschatologically) vindicated (yet cf. also xii, 11 on Eunomian divisiveness).

Certainly, according to Philostorgius, the imperial policies against the divine will — from Julian onwards — are appropriately punished. Julian's rule alone, significantly, is branded with ἀσέβεια (cf. vii, 3, 10, 13). The Apostate's attempt to rebuild Jerusalem fails dismally in the face of flames from heaven, an earthquake and a prodigy (9, 14).[56] Christians defecting back to heathenism, whether they were imperial officials or backsliding bishops, typically fall to fatal diseases, God's penalty (ποινή, τιμωρία, κολαστηρία) being commensurate (κατὰ τὸ μητρῷον, παρὰ τῶν ἀναίδην ἀσεβούντων) with their sins (10, 13).[57] The divine (προνοία) ensured that the famed pagan oracle at Delphi would falsely predict the recovery of the emperor's uncle from a divinely ordained illness (12, cf. 10),[58] while Julian himself died ignominiously cursing the gods, with a Persian spear landing near his groin (15).

---

54 For the relevant details, see E. WALFORD, *The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen ... also The Ecclesiastical History of Philostorgius*, London 1855, p. 471 n. 1.

55 Even allowing for Photius' sarcasm in the *Epitome*, this claim squares with the Philostorgian tendency to magnify the neo-Arian influences (unrealistically).

56 Yet cf. RUFINUS, *Hist. eccles.* x, 38–39, paralleled by AMMIANUS, *Rer. Gest.* XXIII, i, 2–3 (clearly neither being sources for Philostorgius, though Rufinus being possibly "corrected" by him).

57 As his cue, the source behind *Chron. Pasch.* 362–363, pp. 546–549 (pp. 37, 39) documents divine retributions against backsliding clerics, Philostorgius incorporating and adapting stories of the ends of Heron and Theotecnus.

58 For the only other known appeal to θεία προνοία, see SUIDAS 2285: ii, in BIDEZ, "Fragments nouveaux," p. 422.

Concerning Julian's reign, we note, Philostorgius is nowhere more Eusebian-looking. He sits firmly in the tradition of those wanting to take up the new genre of ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία that Eusebius of Caesarea was famed for initiating — the neo-Arian deploying it for new disputative and dissentient purposes. He criticises Eusebius of Caesarea's theological stance in his prolegomenon (i, 2), yet it is probably important for him that Eusebius had sympathised with Arianism,[59] so that he chooses to start back at Constantine's rule, where his great predecessor left off; and his own contributions, particularly his first ten books, are apparently offered as an antidote to the post-Eusebian additions of Rufinus (mediated to the East through Gelasius' Greek translation [cf. n. 50]). By a re-writing of the Athanasius story (esp. i, 10–11; ii, 3; iii, 22), as well as through a selection of materials running against the grain of Rufinian orthodoxy (esp. i, 9–ii, 3; iii, 13–14; iv, 8), Philostorgius deliberately subverts the historiographical legitimation being given to orthodoxy under the Theodosian rulers (cf., for example, xi, 3).[60] His miracle stories more than match those in Rufinus,[61] while in revealing the plots by Basil of Ancyra he (re-)calumniates the accusers of Anomoean Arianism with details, persistence and underlying invective reminiscent of the stubborn Athanasius — and all this as a purposeful exercise in ideological defence. The history was designed to show off Philostorgius' polymathic and rhetorical abilities (cf. esp. iii, 9–11) — especially, I would argue, over and against the plain style of a Rufinus. Certainly it remains firmly in-house Christian: details of Julian's death, for instance, are for the edification of believers in general, not to counteract

---

59 In Photius, however, it does not appear *prima facie* that he attacks Eusebius as an Arian.

60 Signs that Philostorgius actually used Rufinus via Gelasius show up early over their curious omissions concerning Crispus (as against *Anon. Vales.* v, 23–26, and other sources [see above, n. 40]); ZOSIMUS, *Hist. nov.* ii, 23; thus BIDEZ, "Fragments, etc: notes complémentaires," (with P. Heselier), pp. 441–442 (= pp. 391–392 of the BIDEZ-WINKELMANN ed. of Philostorgius, as in n. 63 below). See also probable attempts to correct (or "out-point") Rufinus-Gelasius by PHILOSTORGIUS at *Hist. eccles.* ii, 4–6; cf. RUFINUS, *Hist. eccles.* xi, 9 (competitiveness taken in the latter's favour by SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* i, 19 and others); and cf. also nn. 43, 46 above for other relevant data. That Rufinus' weaknesses over the chronology of Athanasius' career have been noted by SOCRATES, *Hist. eccles.* ii, 1, may also reflect some concession to Philostorgius' attempts to correct the Rufinian account; yet cf. n. 56 above.

61 Cf. F. THÉLAMON, *Païens et Chrétiens au IV siècle; l'apport de l'Histoire de Rufin d'Aquilée*, Paris 1981, pt. 3. See also above nn. 56, 60 on corrections.

pagan interpretations that he died a hero's death and was betrayed at the last by a traitorous Christian.[62] The decisive issue was who would and who deserved to win out among the new ecclesio-theological parties.

If the (now no longer secret) *Historia* of Athanasius had combined narrative with tendentious suggestions of apocalyptic, so did Philostorgius' work in its concluding three books. The latter compares Gratian with Nero, and for his pro-Homoousian policy he apparently deserves to be put to death under Maximus the usurper (x, 5). The reigns of the two Theodosii are presaged by dire portents — a strange sword-shaped star heralding very great evils (μεγαλῶν ... κακῶν) to befall the world after Theodosius I defeats (the pro-Arian) Maximus (x, 9, cf. also 11), and a drought-bearing eclipse of the sun after Theodosius II is proclaimed successor to Arcadius (xii, 7–8). Thus whereas Rufinus blames the pro-Arian Valens for exposing the empire to the barbarians (*Hist. eccles.* xi, 13; cf. Philostorgius himself at ix, 17), the Eunomian orients himself vehemently against the Theodosian order. In his own day, and thus under Theodosius II, the worst pestilence than ever before known ravages all Europe and much of Asia, the Roman military is commonly defeated and the barbarians able to carry off many people. Philostorgius connects these calamities with the sword-shaped star, and concludes that a host of death-bearing climatic anomalies adding to such disasters clearly revealed "the divine anger" (ἡ θεία ἀγανάκτησις) (xi, 7; cf. also 8; xii, 2–3). If Athanasius sensed in Constantius' reign the time of the Antichrist, Philostorgius turns the Theodosian era into a cosmic "time of troubles", when God scourges with his wrath (θείας ... μάστιγας) to induce repentance (esp. xii, 8–10).[63] Picking up on his initially stated interest in the Book of Daniel, the neo-Arian evidently saw the most extraordinary Roman barbarian marriage of his time — between the abducted Placidia (Theodosius I's daughter and sister of the western emperor Honorius) and Atalphus (Alaric's wife's brother) (in 414) — as the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy: "The kingdom of iron and the kingdom of clay united together (xii, 4; cf. Dan. 2: 31–45)."[64] Philostorgius was obviously not seeking preferment! On his reading, even Theodosius the Great, though worthy of

---

62 See esp. LIBANIUS, *Julianus*; cf. also P. CHUVEN, *Chronicle of the Last Pagans*, trans. B.A. ARCHER, Cambridge Mass. 1990, pp. 48–49.

63 Cf. also WINKELMANN, "Einleitung," to J. BIDEZ & WINKELMANN (edd.), GCS, Berlin 1981, pp. xciiiff.

64 As rightly noted by A.E. NOBBS, "Philostorgius' View of the Past," in CLARKE (ed.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, p. 258. Orosius, in the West, is more accepting of this union (*Hist. adv. Pag.* vii, 40), yet cf. Sulpicius SEVERUS, *Chron.* ii, 3.

respect for his zeal against paganism, still dies an unpleasant death — by dropsy — on account of "immoderate pleasures" (τρυφῆς ἀμετρίᾳ) (xi, 2). And it would hardly have been pleasant for Theodosius II to imagine what apocalyptic retribution the historian saw in store for him! Here the daring "Athanasian spirit" of historical dialectic has reasserted itself, but at the hands of quite a contrary mind.

The two nonconformists risked official repressiveness for their strong stands, Athanasius the more so because he occupied the most crucial episcopate at the height of a controversy that had, after all, issued from Alexandria. The patriarch also did not balk at accusing the pro-Arian Constantius of impiety in tracts quite open by comparison to his secret *Historia Arianorum*.[65] The discomforts of recurrent exile ensued, if only to strengthen both his resolve and popularity, establishing him in the end, what is more, as the most heroicised nonconformist of Byzantine history (with Chrysostom, I would adjudge, coming a close second).[66] Athanasius was firmly dissenting at the beginning of that history, being increasingly perceived through time in Byzantium's long enduring world as the first uncowed and doughty champion of orthodoxy (as distinct from a martyr standing up for the Faith in general), and the earliest re-securer of the (idealised) Constantinian vision after it was so quickly put under threat by heresy. In context, by comparison, Philostorgius was defender of a fast-dying cause withering under the Theodosian Establishment. By 425 he obviously risked the loss of any preferment (clerical or otherwise) and the likelihood of exile, but evidently not imprisonment or his neck, considering both the relevant ruling in *Codex Theodosianus* (at XVI, 5, 8) and the very diminishment of the "neo-Arian" following in the historian's own lifetime. It would have taken a miracle indeed for a reversal of his party's fortunes, and that perhaps explains why at the end of his work — on all surviving appearances — he is much more concerned with imperial politics and less with ecclesiastical affairs.[67] By his time, in any case, other heterodoxies were beginning to take the focus of alarm away from the various

---

65 Esp. as in *De synod.* (see n. 3 above); cf. *Apol. de Fuga*, 26 [some texts].

66 Vital in setting this heroicisation in train was Gregory NAZIANZUS, *In Laud. Athan.* (*Orat.* 21; PG 35, 1081–1128), and on Chrysostom, PALLADIUS, *Dialog.* (cf. above n. 33).

67 Following R.A. MARKUS, "Church History and Early Church Historians," in D. BAKER (ed.), *The Materials, Sources and Methods of Ecclesiastical History*, Ecclesiastical History Society Papers, Oxford 1975, p. 12, although it cannot be inferred that Philostorgius was looking to Arian-led barbarian invaders as agents of salvation (cf. xii, 4).

Arianisms.[68] Philostorgius' dissentient eschatology invokes God's retribution on Theodosiana in desperation, while Athanasius projects an Antichrist more in the tradition of pre-Constantinian martyrs, a spectre of evil that the faithful must needs bear with personal patience and paradigmatic action rather than calling down God's wrathful blasts to make history suit the losers.[69] The energies of their texts, however, are very largely argumentative, and in their tendentiousness these two authors naturally look for signs in events that confirm the divine *pronoia* and distributive justice in favour of their truths and advocacies. With the inevitably problematic marriage of Church and Empire, however, and the very messiness of the Orthodox-Arian "feud" itself, there were going to be historical outcomes enough to justify each side's continuing confidence in God's providential overlordship.

---

68 I.e., towards Nestorianism especially, as the last books in two of his "tripartite" successors show; yet it was his act of writing above all, I suspect, that motivated Socrates and those after him to clinch the historical victory over Arianism with a written "foreverness".

69 Cf. J.H. NEWMAN, "Advent Sermons on Antichrist," in his *Tracts for the Times*, London 1838–40, V, pp. 1–10.

HISTORIANS AND THE EARLY CHURCH: 2

ECCENTRICS AND COENOBITES IN THE LATE ROMAN EAST

Philip Rousseau / University of Auckland

I shall have occasion in the near future to lay emphasis on the predominance of coenobitic asceticism in both eastern and western sectors of the empire during the fifth and sixth centuries.[1] In doing so, I shall make use of some eastern texts, by Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Cyril of Scythopolis, and John of Ephesus in particular; texts that have often been quoted as evidence of less structured forms of ascetic endeavour. It seemed useful to take this opportunity to discuss the material in greater detail than was possible in what had to be a more general survey.

It is worth reminding ourselves about the nature of the problem. A strong impression remains at the surface of much secondary literature: that many "holy men" in the fifth and sixth centuries were startling extremists. They are seen, nevertheless, as wielding a forceful social influence, which the historian has been invited to analyse by appealing to various anthropological or sociological models. In the English-speaking world, if not more widely, we may with some justice trace back that tendency to Peter Brown's famous essay of 1971 (although, as his own documentation reveals, there was already at that time a wide-ranging academic debate in which he was able to place himself).[2] In doing so, we should recall what seems to have been Brown's major emphasis: his eastern heroes, precisely because they wielded that social influence, had been forced to function, he believed, as individuals in some way "estranged" or "distanced" from the communities around them — "non-conformist", if you like, to take up the theme of our conference:

> The predominance of the holy man, therefore, marked out late antiquity as a distinct phase of religious history. The classical period conjures up the image of a great temple; the Middle Ages, of a Gothic cathedral. In between, it is the portraits that strike the imagination .... For some centuries, the *locus* of the supernatural was thought of as resting on individual men. The use of the holy man coincides, as we have seen, with the erosion of classical institutions; his decline — or rather the levelling-off of the trajectory of his ascent —

---

1 P. ROUSSEAU, "Monasticism," chapter 26 of the forthcoming new edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. XIV, edited by A. CAMERON, B. WARD-PERKINS & M. WHITBY.

2 P. BROWN, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *JRS* 61, 1971, pp. 80–101.

> coincides with the re-assertion of a new sense of the majesty of the community.[3]

I suggest that the argument is not easy to sustain. I make the point, not in order to embark upon a merely negative dissection of one article, but because the judgement sits oddly with what seems to me to have been an overwhelming emphasis, in ascetic circles, on communal enterprise.

Let us look at some of the sources that have been taken to exalt the solitary or eccentric. Theodoret's *Historia religiosa*, for example, written in the mid-fifth century, makes constant reference to coenobitic practice and (not surprisingly) to episcopal anxiety and control. It is disturbing to find so sober a figure as the late John Meyendorff asserting that: "Theodoret mentions the existence of coenobitic communities of monks, but, in his descriptions, he dwells almost exclusively on hermits who practice the most severe forms of asceticism."[4] The fact is that, of the thirty sections of the *Historia religiosa*, ten provide clear accounts either of coenobitic activity or of a context that implies such activity. Many others are less specific only, one suspects, because of the nature of the anecdote in each case; and they certainly do not rule out the possibility that they refer to a coenobitic *milieu*. By contrast, only two sections make any clear reference to the "village patron" described by Peter Brown; and they have to be interpreted very carefully, as we shall see. (Two other passages are tempting, but vague or ambiguous.)

Far from focussing on extremism and eccentricity, Theodoret wished to present an account that could stand for his readers as the basis for their own rule of life. Imitation far outweighed admiration. His heroes, "who in a mortal and passible body [had] displayed impassibility", take on, it is true, an iconic quality — "made themselves, as it were, living images (εἰκόνας ... ἐμψύχους)".[5] But to make it clear how little he encouraged mere wonderment and how much he expected some taking to heart, Theodoret added:

---

3 BROWN, "Rise and Function," p. 100.

4 J. MEYENDORFF, *Imperial Unity, Christian Divisions. The Church 450–680 A. D.*, Crestwood 1989, pp. 83–84.

5 THEODORET, *Historia religiosa* (henceforth *HR*) Prologue, 2, ed. 1: 128, tr. p. 4. For the text and extensive historical commentary, see *Théodoret de Cyr, Histoire des moines de Syrie*. Introduction, texte critique, traduction, notes par P. CANIVET et A. LEROY-MOLINGHEN, 2 vols., Sources Chrétiennes nos. 234, 257, Paris 1977, 1979. For the translation used here, see *A History of the Monks of Syria by Theodoret of Cyrrhus*. Translated with an introduction and notes by R.M. PRICE, Cistercian Studies no. 88, Kalamazoo Mich. 1985.

> We are recording a life that teaches philosophy (φιλοσοφίας διδάσκαλον) and has emulated the way of life in heaven; we do not portray their bodily features nor do we display for those in ignorance representations of them, but we sketch the forms of invisible souls (τῶν ἀοράτων ψυχῶν τὰς ἰδέας) and display unseen wars and secret struggles (πολέμους ἀθεάτους καὶ συμπλοκὰς ἀφανεῖς).[6]

The implications of that declaration have to be measured first against the notorious portrayal of Symeon Stylites, who can scarcely qualify as an ordinary ascetic.[7] Theodoret was careful to spell out the earlier steps in his career: he heard the call of the Gospel, attached himself to a martyr's shrine, joined a group of ascetics, and then finally entered a monastery.[8] What followed that innocuous process was a period of unqualified disobedience, by which he ignored the superiors of his community and in particular rejected the accepted discipline in fasting. As a result, "seeing him do other things of the kind as well, they ordered him to depart from this wrestling-school, lest he should be a cause of harm to those in a weaker bodily constitution who might try to emulate what was beyond their powers".[9] So Symeon comes onto the stage of Theodoret's narrative as a failed, even discredited, coenobite; and he continued to display an undisciplined restlessness, even when more independent.[10] One of his first contacts in that new phase was Bassus, a rural priest who also had under his guidance a virtual ascetic community of "more than two hundred disciples (θιασώταις)", whom he forbade "to go outside the gate (ἔξω τῆς θύρας ἰέναι)" or "to accept offerings of money".[11] Not surprisingly, this freelance abbot with pastoral as well as ascetic responsibilities tried also to dissuade Symeon from his extreme and potentially sinful ambitions.[12] There is no doubt that, perhaps with the grudging support of those more involved in pastoral affairs, Symeon did come to display a broad and less self-centred religiosity. Towards the end of his account, Theodoret admitted that: "he [Symeon] does not neglect care of the holy churches — now fighting pagan impiety, now defeating the insolence of the Jews, at other times scattering the bands of the heretics, sometimes sending instructions on these matters to the emperor, sometimes

---

6 THEODORET, *HR* Prologue, 3, ed. 1: 130, tr. p. 4.
7 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI.
8 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 2–4.
9 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI. 5, tr. p. 162.
10 Observe the transition between THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 6 and 7.
11 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 8, ed. 2: 174, tr. p. 163.
12 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 7.

rousing the governors to divine zeal, at [other times] charging the very shepherds of the churches to take still greater care of their flocks"[13] — all activities that might have appeared reasonably acceptable to pastors such as Bassus and Theodoret himself. But the statement was made only after considerable misgivings had also been rehearsed. Theodoret actually visited Symeon, and objected strongly to his bestowing blessings, an action he considered properly restricted to the clergy.[14] Such anxious interventions were not limited to the case of Symeon. Theodoret criticised the régime of another ascetic, James of Cyrrhestica, and asserted on a separate occasion that his habit of remaining silent in the presence of visitors was a symptom of selfishness.[15] There are other more generally expressed signs that Theodoret felt ill at ease in the face of practices such as those of Symeon. "I myself," he wrote, "do not think that this standing [on a pillar] has occurred without the dispensation of God, and because of this I ask fault-finders to curb their tongue and not let it be carried away at random."[16] Clearly, no other justification had sprung to mind. It was not an argument that came easily even to Theodoret. In another case he made the same grudging admission: "I am therefore of the opinion that the God of the universe allows the beast to rage against his sacred body in order to reveal undisguised the endurance of his godly soul"; but that was far from recommending the experience to others.[17]

Such hints and anecdotes serve to remind us that Theodoret was a bishop, and that the *Historia religiosa* represents a bishop's view of asceticism. Nor was he isolated within his own account. At least five chapters, as we shall see, describe men who had made the transition from ascetic to bishop. Probably the most startling instance was that of Abraham in chapter XVII, one of the two "patronal" anecdotes already alluded to. Let us read first the description given by Peter Brown, with its characteristic emphases:

> We can even watch the rise of a patron. Abraham the hermit came to a pagan village in the Lebanon. It was, Theodoret was careful to point out (in exactly the same terms as Libanius had done) a village of many owners — a village, that is, of independent farmers. He rented a house and settled down as an agent for the walnut crop. He sang the Psalms. His neighbours promptly blocked the entrance of his house with refuse. But, when the tax collector came, it was

---

13 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 27, tr. p. 171; §26 describes cures and the resolution of disputes.
14 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 14–15.
15 THEODORET, *HR* XXI, 10, 33–34.
16 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 12, tr. p. 165.
17 THEODORET, *HR* XXII, 6, tr. p. 152.

> Abraham who was able through friends in Apamaea to arrange a loan for the village. From then on he was declared a προστάτης of the village.[18]

From that summary alone, one might never guess that Abraham became a bishop. Indeed, Theodoret opened his account of the man by stating that the only reason why he mentioned him was *because* he became a bishop, exemplifying that highly valued skill, the maintenance of an ascetic way of life in a pastoral role. After early ascetic training, he began to travel disguised as a merchant, and settled in the village referred to — with companions, one might note (μετὰ τῶν συνόντων) — for the expressly pastoral purpose of rescuing its inhabitants from "the darkness of impiety".[19] The tax collectors arrived just as the villagers had decided to stop their persecution of the newcomers. Abraham averted official anger with a promise to foot the bill; and it was then that he was acclaimed προστάτης. He picked up the money from friends (in Emesa) only afterwards.[20] The immediate result of his "patronal" popularity was that he was able to persuade the villagers to build a church; and they promptly suggested that he should be their priest — an outcome possible only with the collaboration of a bishop. He then stayed in the village for three years; but it was entirely as a priest that he did so, guiding the villagers effectively towards God (πρὸς τὰ θεῖα ποδηγήσας καλῶς). After that time, he returned to a monastic domicile of some sort (πάλιν τὸ μοναχικὸν κατέλαβε καταγώγιον), appointing in his place one of his companions (ἕτερον τῶν συνόντων ἀντ' αὐτοῦ προβληθῆναι παρασκευάσας).[21] Any patronal or mediatory authority he exercised thereafter was described by Theodoret in the context of his episcopal career elsewhere.[22] Far from bearing witness, therefore, to a solitary holy man acting as rural patron over a long period of time, Theodoret's account presents us with an established ascetic, accompanied by at least several others like himself, inspired by a specifically pastoral zeal, achieving status by an isolated ploy, and then exercising priestly authority in

---

18 BROWN, "Rise and Function," p. 86.

19 THEODORET, *HR* XVII, 2, ed. 2: 36, tr. p. 120. John of Ephesus mentions ascetics travelling in such disguise for similar purposes. The order of phrases in the *HR* suggests that the "companions" also settled in the κώμη, and the door-blocking scene states clearly that Abraham was not alone in the house (ἀποπνιγομένους ... χωννυμένους ἐθέλοντας προσκομίζοντας).

20 THEODORET, *HR* XVII, 3.

21 THEODORET, *HR* XVII, 4, ed. 2: 40.

22 THEODORET, *HR* XVII, 5–6.

a quite customary way, still supported by ascetic colleagues, choosing in the end to return to a clearly defined ascetic establishment.

The second suggestive example of rural patronage in Theodoret, along the lines that interested Peter Brown, is the account given of Maësymas: "Having been conspicuous in the solitary life (διαλάμψας δὲ ἐν τῷ καθ' ἑαυτὸν βίῳ), he was entrusted with the care of a village (κώμης τινὸς ἐνεχειρίσθη τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν)."[23] However, it is quickly made clear that, like Abraham, he was exercising a priestly function (ἱερουργῶν δὲ καὶ τὰ θεῖα πρόβατα νέμων ... τὸν ἱερέα τὸν πρεσβύτην ἐπαρᾶσθαι λέγων);[24] and the two miracles recorded by Theodoret both concerned people from outside the village — one of whom, indeed, the Antiochene landowner Letoïos, was the effective *patronus* of the place (τὸν τῆς κώμης ἐκείνης δεσπότην).[25]

The careers of those two men, Abraham and Maësymas, reflect back also on Symeon's reluctant admirer, the priest Bassus. Although he had almost chorepiscopal authority over other rural priests,[26] Bassus, as we have seen, was not unlike Abraham in having a circle of ascetic colleagues, for whom he had drawn up detailed rules.[27] The three stories taken together reinforce our sense of Theodoret's chief purpose: to recommend a village-based alliance between ascetics and clergy, ultimately under episcopal supervision, designed to harness ascetic enthusiasm to the conversion and sacramental service of those communities. Symeon was an embarrassing oddity, who refused, in a sense, to play Theodoret's game.

Two of the three ascetics we have looked at so far (not including Symeon) were associated with a group; and we should turn now to the 30% or so of Theodoret's *Historia* that makes even less ambiguous reference to coenobitic institutions and practice. A good example is the story of Marcianus. The chief impression one gains is of an ordered system, which grew over a period of time, sparked off by inspiring founder-figures, described as "the legislators of this way of life (θεσμοθέται δὲ ταύτης τῆς πολιτείας)".[28] Detailed

---

23 THEODORET, *HR* XIV, 2, ed. 2: 10, tr. p. 110.

24 THEODORET, *HR* XIV, 2, 4, ed. 2: 10, 14.

25 THEODORET, *HR* XIV, 4, ed. 2: 14.

26 He had come across Symeon at Telanissus while πολλὰς περιώδευε κώμας τοῖς κατὰ κώμην ἱερεῦσιν ἐπιστατῶν, THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 7, ed. 2: 172; and see 2: 173 n. 2.

27 THEODORET, *HR* XXVI, 8. The prescriptions controlled in particular, indeed limited, the contact allowed between the ascetics and the community. There is no doubt that we are dealing here with a monastery in the strict sense: note the tell-tale allusion to *clausura*, μήτε τινὰ ἔξω τῆς θύρας ἰέναι, ed. 2: 174.

28 THEODORET, *HR* III, 4, ed. 1: 252, tr. p. 39.

phraseology points to monastic régimes. We have a "head of the monastery (τοῦ τῆς μονῆς ἡγεμονεύοντος)" and a monk "who gave answers (ὁ τὰς ἀποκρίσεις ποιούμενος)" (designated, in other words, to speak to outsiders).[29] A monastic liturgy was in place, together with set timetables; and the latter made provision for service to the community — "the time laid down for meeting people (τῆς γὰρ ὡρισμένης συντυχίας ... ὁ καιρὸς) ... the divine work of hospitality (καὶ τῷ θείῳ τῆς φιλοξενίας κατορθώματι)".[30] Finally Agapetus, one of Marcianus's original disciples, became bishop of Apamea. An attempt was made to ordain Marcianus himself. A bevy of distinguished churchmen approached him, including Flavian of Antioch; and Theodoret gave a delightful account of their caution and embarrassment: "they wished to lay their hands upon him to ordain him a priest, but they were afraid to make the gesture; this one invited that and vice versa, but they were all equally reluctant and took their leave."[31]

An especially interesting point to pick out from that story is the way in which monastic communities developed. We begin with Marcianus and his two disciples; and communities then gather around them and subsequently peel away to take on lives of their own. That seems to me to have been the most enduring characteristic of eastern asceticism in the fifth and sixth centuries. Whenever one comes across an individual of "star quality", more often than not one finds that his career culminated in the generation of large and highly organised ascetic groups. It is the process, the momentum, that we have to take note of. A chapter like that devoted to Baradatus, for example, appears to make a static distinction between "companies (οἱ μὲν γὰρ κατὰ συμμορίας ἀγωνιζόμενοι)" and "the solitary life (οἱ δὲ τὸν μοναδικὸν ἀσπαζόμενοι βίον)".[32] Yet we do no more, in such cases, than study a snapshot, catching only one moment in the process by which all the ascetics involved were moving, each at his own pace, from a more isolated to a more corporate endeavour.

The story of Julian Saba provides an excellent example. Disciples gathered about him, eventually to number a hundred or more, to the extent that Theodoret felt obliged to use his characteristic vocabulary of coenobitism: this was Julian's "wrestling-school" and "choir", and took part in a common liturgy.[33] Yet within that larger group — and we shall observe

---

29 THEODORET, *HR* III, 22, ed. 1: 288, tr. p. 46.

30 THEODORET, *HR* III, 14, 20, ed. 1: 276, 286, tr. pp. 43, 46. For liturgy, see §§ 2, 12.

31 THEODORET, *HR* III, 11, tr. mine.

32 THEODORET, *HR* XXVII, 1, ed. 2: 216, tr. p. 177. See also XXX, 4.

33 THEODORET, *HR* II, 3–4.

this in John of Ephesus also — pairs, of master and disciple, were allowed to persist; and the disciples themselves could leave, to set up "wrestling-schools" of their own.[34] From that society as a whole, bishops could be drawn — in this instance, Acacius of Beroea, consecrated in 378: "Entrusted for fifty-eight years with tending this flock, he did not abandon the form of ascetic life, but mixed ascetic and civic virtue (ἀσκητικὴν δὲ καὶ πολιτικὴν ἐκέρασεν ἀρετήν)."[35] Perhaps it was precisely in the face of that promotion that other ascetics decided to take to their heels, "to escape being honoured";[36] but they often returned soon enough, to bolster communities threatened, for example, by heresy.[37] We end, in fact, with several movements: between solitary and communal asceticism, between clerical and non-clerical spheres, and between town and country. Ascetic society reflected and illustrated all three axes, each with its pair of poles and each in its way central to the development of the Christian empire.

I hope it is now clear why I emphasise, at least in the interests of balance, both the episcopal and the coenobitic elements in Theodoret's *Historia religiosa*. An exhaustive account would examine the *Historia ecclesiastica* and the *Letters* as well. But if we direct our attention beyond Theodoret, we can with no less justice clarify and reinforce the points already made.

Take, first, the account of Palestinian monasticism presented, a century or so later, by Cyril of Scythopolis.[38] He made the mobile and developing relationship between small groups and large, between knots of disciples and ordered communities, virtually the foundation of ascetic practice in the province. The constant shift of attention back and forth between the *lavra* and the desert, between weekday solitude and weekend gathering, between the intimacy of discipleship and the formative strength of community, marks the structure of chapter after chapter in *Life* after *Life*. Particularly notable is the habit or technique of "split, transplant and colonise", already discovered in Theodoret's biographies of Marcianus and Julian Saba.[39] It was, as in their

---

34 THEODORET, *HR* II, 6, 9.

35 THEODORET, *HR* II, 9, ed. 1: 216, tr. p. 28.

36 THEODORET, *HR* II, 13, tr. p. 29.

37 THEODORET, *HR* II, 16.

38 The standard edition is by E. SCHWARTZ, *Kyrill von Skythopolis*, *TU* 49: 2, Leipzig 1939. Symeon METAPHRASTES' version of the *Vita Euthymii* is printed in J.P. MIGNE, *PG* 114, 595–734.

39 The phrase is that of J. BINNS, in his introduction to *The Lives of the Monks of Palestine by Cyril of Scythopolis*, translated by R.M. PRICE, p. xix, Cistercian Studies no. 114, Kalamazoo Mich. 1991. See, for example, *Vita Euthymii*, 16, 32.

case, the principle of growth. From the relationship between Euthymius and Theoctistus, and between Sabas and Theodosius, there grew a sense of mutual dependence between the relative solitude of the first in each case and the *lavra*-based responsibilities of the second.[40] The *lavra* was both ordered and well endowed; and those characteristics were the direct result of the "individual" genius of Cyril's heroes:

> [Sabas] lived as a solitary (ἡσυχάζει) for many days under a single carob tree, living on carobs. On learning this, the bailiff of the place came out to see him and built him a cell in this very place; this cell, by the help and favor of Christ, became in a short time a cenobium.[41]

Most important of all, as those developments unfolded, the gap, so to speak, between the two poles diminished. That strikes one even in the earliest case of Euthymius. He and Theoctistus set off into the remote Wadi Mukellik. There, Theoctistus was left to run things (including coping with disciples and admirers): Euthymius cultivated "the status of a stranger (ὡς ξένου τόπον ἐπέχων)".[42] In due course, the Wadi Mukellik community became a coenobium, complete with a church. One might assume, therefore, that Euthymius was elsewhere; but no: he was in the church itself, and it was there that he lived "the solitary life (or rather, a reticent and tranquil life: ἡσυχάζων)" — "till Saturday he will not see anyone, for he practises solitude (again: ἡσυχάζει νῦν)".[43] When Euthymius did move away, it was always his intention that his new lodging should also become a coenobium (as happened at his death); and he returned frequently for visits to the older *lavra*.[44]

Those specifically ascetic developments were connected very closely by Cyril with the pastoral expansion of the Church and with the exercise of priestly and episcopal authority.[45] Sabas was the most obvious example of

---

40 That was very marked in the case of Sabas: see *Vita Sabae* 30, 65.

41 *Vita Sabae*, 35, ed. SCHWARTZ p. 120, tr. Price p. 130. There are several interesting aspects to this tale. Sabas was there "for many days (ἐπὶ πλείους ἡμέρας)", which may not have been all that long. The place was not so wild that it had no need of or use for a "bailiff (ἐπίτροπος)": Sabas, for all his solitude, was still well within the orbit of estate management. Finally, the collaboration of seculars was not unusual: compare *Vita Sabae* 39, and see *Vita Euthymii* 12, 14.

42 *Vita Euthymii* 8, ed. SCHWARTZ, p. 16, tr. Price, p. 12.

43 *Vita Euthymii* 9, ed. SCHWARTZ, p. 17, tr. Price, pp. 12, 15.

44 *Vita Euthymii* 14, 28, 39.

45 He set the tone at the very beginning of the *Vita Euthymii*. Its opening sections were designed to colour the *Lives* as a whole, and end with

that connection. Given the range of his responsibilities and the number of his admirers and adherents, it was felt, significantly enough, that he could not display effective leadership unless he was ordained a priest.[46] At the instigation of the bishop of Jerusalem, he was also appointed "archimandrite" of all the monks in Palestine — a custom peculiar to that province.[47] At least from that time forward, Sabas was uninhibited in his association with bishops;[48] and several of the monks under his authority became bishops themselves.[49] Euthymius before him had shown his readiness, not only to associate with the clerical order, but also to undertake pastoral work in rural areas.[50]

Let me conclude with corroborations from John of Ephesus.[51] Since he presented a Monophysite view, one has to guard oneself against the possibility of a built-in non-conformity in his work; but there is no reason to suppose that he described monastic institutions that were in any way atypical in the eastern empire of the mid-sixth century, and he was certainly a reliable "continuator" of Theodoret in relation to Syrian practice.[52]

The chief impression gained from John's account is of a highly ordered and materially well established monastic system. As with Theodoret, however, smaller groups survived within the coenobitic context. Under the pressure of persecution, communities could fragment along those lines, as when Z'ura went to Constantinople with ten disciples, and John the Nazarite

---

Euthymius's ordination and deliberately assigned responsibility for the supervision of several monasteries, §§ 1–5.

46 *Vita Sabae* 19. See D. CHITTY, *The Desert a City*, Oxford 1966, p. 107.

47 Sabas was not the first: see CHITTY, *Desert*, pp. 86–87, and, for Sabas himself, p. 110. It was Sabas who then divided his own authority with THEODOSIUS, *Vita Sabae* 30.

48 *Vita Sabae* 35. His association with Jerusalem involved extensive investment in property there, binding his own enterprises with the long-standing development of monasticism in the city, much of it under distinguished patronage: *Vita Sabae* 31, 53.

49 In addition to the passages mentioned in the previous note, see *Vita Sabae* 27.

50 In addition to the opening sections already mentioned, see *Vita Euthymii* 12–16, 32–34, 47.

51 I claim no competence in Syriac, and have relied on the translation by E.W. BROOKS, *John of Ephesus, Lives of the Eastern Saints*, *Patrologia orientalis*, 3 vols., Paris 1923–25, t. XVII, f. 1; t. XVIII, f. 4; t. XIX, f. 2.

52 For a standard account of the context, see W.H.C. FREND, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries*, London & New York 1972. On John himself, see S.A. HARVEY, *Asceticism and Society in Crisis. John of Ephesus and the Lives of the Eastern Saints*, Berkeley 1990.

with thirty.[53] In calmer times, a small number of admirers might attach themselves in a special way to one member of the community, as in the case of James and — a little more oddly — of Malkha, a winter visitor from the mountains.[54] The socially enfolded "solitude" of Euthymius is clearly recalled by John's account of "a certain blessed man [who] settled for a considerable time as a solitary in a cell in the Ennaton of Alexandria with two disciples". The conjunction of eremitic, master-disciple, and monastic vocabulary could hardly be more striking.[55]

That pattern certainly made for somewhat disjointed communities. John's description of the coenobium at Amida offers a wonderful sense of huddled privacy. The personal devotions of its occupants gave rise to a great hum of prayer, "from all the rooms and from all the cells and from all the doorways and from all the corners, and the corridors and halls of all that great convent".[56] The James mentioned above could find himself assigned to entirely coenobitic "weekly duties", and yet acquire more idiosyncratic status "in great practices of standing and of watching".[57] Harfat seems to have followed a path rather the reverse of what we have more commonly noted: having been a chorepiscopus, he withdrew to "a convent of the solitary life" (a nice paradox) and then to a hut built for him by "a certain believing lady". Nevertheless, companions were still available to dissuade him from wearing weighty irons; and they used an institutional argument: "what regulation commands this matter of the irons to be carried out?" "We wish you," they continued, "to throw off these irons which are a useless burden, and lade yourself instead of them with the burden of labours performed with knowledge; and thus you will please God."[58]

John himself was consistently anxious that the wisdom of the group and the custom of the community should modify extremes of individual devotion. There was hesitation and criticism, not unlike that displayed by Theodoret in relation to Symeon, when John was faced with a pious visitor who insisted on offering thanks between each morsel of his meal. The man stood out so clearly against the detailed background of the common refectory, service at table, the ringing of bells, the round of work and study under the supervision of the archimandrite. John ruminated with generous concession: "This man is a solitary, and further also he is his own master, and there is none to

---

53 JOHN, *Lives* 2–3.
54 JOHN, *Lives* 15, 29; and see also 33, 35.
55 JOHN, *Lives* 32, tr. BROOKS, 2: [384] (i.e., the continuous pagination).
56 JOHN, *Lives* 35, tr. 2: [407]f.
57 JOHN, *Lives* 15, tr. 1: [221].
58 JOHN, *Lives* 11, tr. 1: [160]f., [164].

command him, and it is easy for him; and moreover neither is he pressed by matters of the obligation of domestic business; and therefore he can observe this amazing canon" — a judgement in which jealousy competed painfully with prudence![59] The story of Caesaria provides another useful example. She had taken up "the habit of the solitary and monastic life" (our paradox resolved) and had been persuaded by "bishops and many blessed men" to pour oil on her herbs at the weekends. John added his voice, urging her (at first unsuccessfully) "to give up high things and embrace moderate things".[60] Having spent some time in Alexandria, Caesaria took it into her head to seek out the remoter desert, although still with a few companions. John again counselled moderation, this time gaining her ultimate compliance, urging that "these plans if put into effect by her would even bring danger upon her, the danger of the destruction involved in the scattering of all the souls that had gone out with her". Corporate responsibility, in other words, was to outweigh individual enthusiasm; and Caesaria did in the end endow and live in a monastic community.[61]

The most intriguing point of all is that stylites — and they do appear in John's *Lives*: the admirable "standing" of James, mentioned above, is probably an example — found their normal place, nevertheless, inside the monasteries themselves. They also were "enfolded", no less than supposed "solitaries", exceptional masters, and weird winter visitors from inhospitable uplands. One can do no better by way of illustration than recount the tale of Abraham and Maro. One should keep in mind throughout, not only the unambiguously monastic context in which they operated, but also the constant reference to clerical interest and the importance of the sacramental life and of the liturgy generally.

Abraham's story begins with his entry into a monastery: it was the monastery that had the column; and one had to wait one's turn to use it. "Now there was a high stone column to which men used to come in order to stand upon it in that monastery; and after he had broken himself for a space of ten years by great labours he himself ascended the column."[62] The move was part, therefore, of a broader ascetic régime. Maro, by contrast, was chary of columns: "I will have nothing to do with things that gain very vain glory

---

59 JOHN, *Lives* 17, tr. 1: [257].

60 JOHN, *Lives* 54, tr. 3: [533].

61 JOHN, *Lives* 54, tr. 3: [535]. A monastery for men was also established.

62 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [56]f. We learn later that the column was as far inside the monastery gate as a woman's voice could carry. The monastery itself could be seen "even at a great distance, and the blessed man's station moreover is seen above, being black", tr. 1: [82].

for someone but deceive certain persons."[63] His eccentricity consisted, at first, in living in a hollow log — which, however, he brought "inside the enclosure in a certain corner". Abraham thought Maro, apparently, a lot more peculiar than himself![64] When Abraham died, however, Maro took his place. He did so amid much public ceremony, attended by "a great number of people in the villages and of the cities gathered together".[65] He continued to act, however, even as an attractive and powerful oddity, very much within the monastic cycle. When he cured one John, for example, he told the boy's mother to go to "the refectory" and bring food from "the servitors" (that is to say, the *hebdomadarii*: those engaged, like James, in the "weekly service").[66] On another occasion, in the middle of the night, Maro had called out a warning:

> When all of us heard the voice from above in the monastery within, having all been awoken we were agitated; and, because it was a short time before service, we did not ourselves dare to go into his enclosure; but the presbyter who was next after him went in, and cried out and said to him, "Sir, give your blessing", three times.

Clearly this stylite was closely integrated into the monastery in which he "stood".[67]

Other references, however, support the view — not always with reassuring clarity — that Maro had firm connections with the communities outside. John began by saying that "men used to come" to the monastery specifically to "stand", as if to say that in other respects they were not "normal" ascetics; and people from the "villages" and "cities" had witnessed Maro's ascent. John wrote elsewhere of the monastery concerned that it was "in the same village in which this saint had his stand" — an odd disjuncture, which cannot, nevertheless, given other clear references, imply that Maro's column was not inside the monastery walls.[68] Maro had "his own presbyter", whatever that may mean, and however we are supposed to relate it to the "presbyter who was next after him" mentioned above; and he addressed not only "the brothers who were with him" (suggesting, once again, a

---

63 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [57].
64 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [57].
65 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [59].
66 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [62].
67 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [78]f. John had mentioned earlier that "sometimes the service was performed in his presence", tr. 1: [76].
68 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [72].

resident circle of disciples) but also "his own priests and those of the villages".[69]

Those rural and sacerdotal connections recall anecdotes in Theodoret, and provide a context for at least one other incident in Maro's life, when he championed the poor against the rich (an habitual emphasis, by John's account). The wealthy man attacked on this occasion made an interesting reply: "Blessed man, sit on your stone, and mind your own business. I will not neglect matters which I know to be proper for me. Sit in your monastery and be quiet, and you have no concern with me, and I none with you."[70] The "enfolding" of stylite by monastery, therefore, had severely restricted the enthusiast's ability to operate in a "secular" sphere. Even the "village-related" allusions in John's text were suspiciously coupled with reference to priests. When, therefore, Maro continued to assert a broad interest, reaching beyond the monastery walls, he expressed it in terms of collaboration with the pastoral institutions of the Church. He said to the crowds, "What has misled you into leaving God's altar and his great power which took up its dwelling in the saints who were slain for his name?" — a clear reference to liturgical cult.[71] His prayer in the face of "barbarian" inroads in 515 was similarly ecclesiastical in character: "What, Lord, will happen to thy churches and thy monasteries? What, my Lord, wilt thou do to thine altars and thy service and thy sacred vessels, Lord? ... What will happen to thy priests and the people of the believers?"[72]

We should not be surprised, therefore, to find other references to potentially marginal or extreme enthusiasts who were brought not only within a coenobitic orbit but also under the authority of the clergy. The process, in addition to reflecting the intentions both of the government and of church councils, represented fear of competition, even from a woman like Euphemia: "these women (said "those who held power in the church") are disturbing the city, and the citizens fear and honour them more than the bishops."[73] John himself was anxious to make bishops part of his own

---

69 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [75], [77]. "His own presbyter" recurs at his death, and is revealed to have been not only "his successor" (on the column) but also "his kinsman", tr. 1: [83].

70 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [74].

71 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [64].

72 JOHN, *Lives* 4, tr. 1: [78].

73 JOHN, *Lives* 12, tr. 1: [182]. "Disturbing the city" was an important element. Euphemia competed within the urban sphere of episcopal authority, deploying her household resources and élite connections in the service of the needy, and housing persecuted ascetics with all due respect to ecclesiastical conventions, providing "a martyrs' chapel, with likenesses

survey: "they also were complete and perfect in both forms of beauty (asceticism and the pastorate)."[74] Maro's story leads us usefully to further illustration of precisely that conviction, not only on John's part but on that of others at the time. Maro had given refuge to a rather unsavoury character, Sergius, who was fleeing from Chalcedonian wrath, following an attack by himself and some ascetic associates on a Jewish community which had been, in fact, rather generous to their Christian neighbours. Sergius had calculated that bishops would be afraid to criticise Maro, given his popularity. It was a bishop, indeed, who had decided that he should try to win Maro's favour, in the hope that he and others (Chalcedonians) could then say usefully, "Lo! Maro on his column agrees with us".[75] Sergius continued true to his own temperament: he went into Amida to hear Bishop Abraham preach and was so angered by what he heard that he attacked the poor prelate physically. At first, few came to their bishop's rescue: "they feared on account of the people to lay their hands upon the blessed man."[76] However, he was eventually thoroughly beaten up by resident clergy and sent off to a large Chalcedonian monastery in Armenia, where his new confrères missed no opportunity to humiliate and assault him. He eventually escaped and set up a monastery of his own, back in Syria. That might appear to contrast with his early more eremitic style of life; but the project got under way simply because he went into a village to pray and the villagers themselves promptly built a monastery for him. Predictably relentless, however, the Chalcedonians caught up with him: "Since you have built a monastery," they said, "without an order, we have been ordered to pull your monastery down, and conduct you to the bishop." Few could have escaped such interference.[77]

What may we conclude from those accounts? The question is, what is the proper context within which to present the ascetic, to determine the "function" of the holy man? Does he make best sense within a broad social and economic analysis, or should we be concentrating more on the religious significance of his ideals and activities? If we wish to regard ascetics as "eccentric" — either in their practices or in their "alternative" social influence — then we have to take account of the "enfolding" process we have discussed: an enfolding within coenobitic institutions and within the purview

---

and pictures, and chests, and everything, while the oblation also and the Scriptures and everything that is proper to a monastery were in it", tr. 1: [177].

74 JOHN, *Lives* 24, tr. 2: [325].

75 JOHN, *Lives* 5, tr. 1: [98].

76 JOHN, *Lives* 5, tr. 1: [103].

77 JOHN, *Lives* 5, tr. 1: [107].

of the clerical order, in relation both to their authority and to their pastoral ambitions. From that we have to argue that any wish on an ascetic's part to indulge in "non-conformity" — in relation either to current theories about human nature and destiny or to perceived failures in the use of power, authority, status, and wealth — had to be expressed in the company of others: had to be expressed, in other words, by a society with its own independent structures. Moreover, that society was visibly controlled more and more by bishops (as the Council of Chalcedon hoped), even in Theodoret's day. There may have been, in other words, an alliance between clergy and ascetics of a "non-conformist" character. The question remains, of course, whether the clergy were thereby attempting to strengthen their own hand against lay and even imperial agenda, or whether they were simply capturing ascetics in order to defend (albeit on their own terms and in their own interests) an ecclesiastical system to which otherwise ascetics might too dangerously object.

HISTORIANS AND THE EARLY CHURCH: 3

DANIEL OF SALAH: A SIXTH CENTURY WEST SYRIAN INTERPRETER OF THE PSALMS

Anne Sunderland / University of Melbourne

Beyond his title there is little known about Daniel of Salah.[1] His reputation stands primarily, both to us and to those later writers of the Syrian church who cited him, on his great, three-volume commentary on the Psalms of David. In this paper I hope to make some preliminary remarks about the background of this composition, and then to present some further observations which may help to place the text within the context of Psalms' interpretation as a whole, and more specifically that of the early Syrian church.

An examination of most standard works on Syriac literature will reveal a reference to this writer, although in the more than two hundred and fifty years since Joseph Assemani, in his great review of oriental literature, included "Daniel Episcopus Salchensis" among the orthodox Syrian writers,[2] opinions have changed as to the provenance of the writer and his work. This is not surprising when the somewhat complicated textual tradition of the Psalms commentary alone is considered. The work itself has survived in a number of different versions, and there are references to it in the work of Antonius Rhetor, the *Ausar Raze* of Bar-Hebraus and in the *Catena* of Severus. In the latter work there is also evidence for a commentary on Qohelet written by Daniel of Salah, but no actual copy of this seems to have survived.[3]

---

1 An entry on "Daniel of Salah" is to be found in most standard works on Syriac literature. See J.S. ASSEMANI, *Bibliotheca orientalis Clementino-Vaticano*, 3 vols., Rome 1719–28, repr. Hildesheim 1975; W. WRIGHT, *A Short History of Syriac Literature*, 2nd ed., London 1894, repr. Amsterdam 1966; R. DUVAL, *La littérature syriaque*, Paris 1907, repr. Amsterdam 1970; A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte der syrischen Literature mit Ausschluss der christlich-palästinensischen Texte*, Bonn 1922, repr. Berlin 1968; J.B. CHABOT, *Littérature syriaque*, Paris 1934; I. Ortiz de URBINA, *Patrologia syriaca*, Rome 1965.

2 ASSEMANI, *Bibliotheca*, I, subtitled *De scriptoribus Syris orthodoxis*, p. 495.

3 WRIGHT, *History*, p. 160 and *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since the Year 1838*, 3 vols., London 1871. The commentary of Daniel of Salah is cited by Antonius in his treatise on the Holy Chrism, DCCCXV (BL Add 14726), p. 831, and in SEVERUS' *Catena* references are found to both the commentaries on Psalms and Qohelet,

Further to this, although the present study is specifically of the Syriac versions, the commentary was also translated for both Arabic and Armenian readers. The earliest Armenian version was commissioned by Catholicos Grigor Vkayaser at the end of the eleventh century and a thirteenth century copy of this work is believed to be the earliest complete version of the entire commentary.[4] The Arabic translations appear to present the commentary in its entirety in a number of eighteenth to nineteenth century manuscripts,[5] and the eighteenth century Karshuni manuscript Berlin 250 contains the third volume of the longer version of the commentary which no longer appears to be extant in a Syriac form.[6]

There are in fact three different Syriac versions of the Psalms commentary attributed to Daniel of Salah, with the longest of these originally consisting of three volumes. Judging from the first two volumes, both extant in manuscripts in the British Library collection, each presented the interpretation of fifty psalms; i.e. Psalms 1–50 and 51–100 and presumably 101–150. The work has most aptly been called the *great*, three-volume psalms commentary of Daniel of Salah,[7] as it is a work of some length. The first volume is found in the tenth century manuscript BL Add 17187 which consists of one hundred and twenty folios where the text is written in two columns of approximately thirty lines each.[8] The second volume is found in BL Add 14679, a manuscript written in northern Egypt and dated by the scribe to A.Gr. 1413 (C.E. 1102).[9] This volume is missing the first four quires and commences therefore with Psalm 62. For the remaining one hundred and ninety-five folios the text is written across the page in approximately twenty-four lines. In both instances William Wright has described the scribal hand as "inelegant"!

DCCCLIII (BL Add 12144), p. 909 and A. MINGANA, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts*, 3 vols., Cambridge 1933–39, Mingana 4, I, col. 16.

4 S.P. COWE, "Daniel of Salah as a Commentator on the Psalter," *StP* 20, 1989, pp. 152–159. This work contains a recent review of available manuscripts of the commentary.

5 Mingana Chr. Arab. 65; MINGANA, *Catalogue*, II, pp. 18–19.

6 Berlin 250 (Sachau 55), E. SACHAU, *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Berlin 1899, pp. 271–272.

7 ASSEMANI, *Bibliotheca*, I, p. 495 (see "Danielis Episcopi Salahani magna expositio super Psalmos").

8 WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, DCCVIII (BL Add 17187), p. 605.

9 WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, DCCX (BL Add 14679), p. 606. Fragments of the second volume (Pss. 51, 58 and 62) are also to be found in the ninth or tenth century manuscript BL Add 14668, DCCIX, p. 606.

It is the first of these two volumes which has been the primary manuscript for this study. The manuscript BL Add 17187 is written, even if inelegantly, in a script typical of that described by Hatch as "borderland".[10] This is typical of the tenth century and consists of an Estrangela script into which features of the later Serta script have entered. The text lacks those vowel symbols based on Greek characters but does include some diacritic points. Each memra has a rubricated title, the length of which varies. In every case the number at least of the memra is in red ink and for the first twenty-two the heading of the psalm is also distinct.[11]

In contrast to this there are two shorter versions of the work. The ninth or tenth century manuscript BL Add 17125 includes what Wright describes as "extracts from, or rather an abridgment of, the Commentary of Daniel of Salah".[12] Here, in the final sixty leaves of this manuscript, is a collection of excerpts from the longer work. Material from all three volumes of the longer work is included from the first until the one hundred and forty-third Psalm, where the manuscript is incomplete.

The second abridgment of the longer version is found in the Vatican manuscript Syriac 155, which contains the memras on Psalms 1–68.[13] Although there are lengthy sections in each memra where the text follows that of the longer version, there has also been a reworking of the material. This is so even to the extent of including allusions and vocabulary different from those found in the longer version. To take the exegetical treatment of Psalm 42: 8 as an example, we find an image of an "iron fetter (ܦܬܝܠܐ) maintained, but instead of it being the object of the "hands of the craftsmen

---

10 W.H.P. HATCH, *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts*, Boston 1946, p. 30.

11 The first twenty-two memras generally present a clearly rubricated heading; of particular interest because they follow, with only minor variations, are those found in Codex Ambrosianus, see A.M. CERIANI, *Translatio Syra Pescitto Veteris Testamenti ex codice Ambrosiano saec. fere photolithographice edita,* Milan 1876–83. The disparate use of Psalms' headings within the manuscripts attributed to Daniel of Salah reflects the tradition within the transmission of the Psalter generally. There is, for example, a different collection of headings in the Daniel of Tella manuscript, Harvard Syr 75 (Harris 65) and in turn an abbreviated form of this in the manuscripts Vatican Syr. 155 and Mingana 147 (see below).

12 WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, CLXXV (BL Add 17125), p. 125.

13 Manuscript Siriaco 155 (Vatican Syr. 155), Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. This is quite possibly the manuscript that Assemani refers to as Syriaco 16, *Bibliotheca*, I, p. 495, or a copy thereof, as in both instances the commentary of Daniel of Salah is preceded by a treatise on the gospels by Dionysius bar SALIBI.

(ܟܬܘܪ ,ܬܪ)",[14] it is affected by the "blow delivered by the blacksmith (ܟܣܦܐ ܟܕܒܫܐ)".[15] Another innovation in the shorter version is the likening of the tempests and billows of the Psalm's text to the waters of baptism.

It is with this second shorter version that a complication arises in the identification of the author Daniel of Salah. Two further eighteenth to nineteenth century versions of a Psalms commentary are found in the manuscripts Harvard Syriac 75 (originally Harris 65)[16] and Mingana Syriac 147,[17] but in this instance are attributed to a Daniel of Tella. There are also a number of nineteenth century copies under this author's title in the library of the Malankara Catholic bishop in Kerala in southern India.[18] However, on comparing the first two of these works with Vatican Syr. 155, despite Alphonse Mingana's comment that the Daniel of Tella who is responsible for the Psalms commentary which is found in his catalogue is "a writer to be distinguished from Daniel of Salah",[19] the texts are found to be virtually identical. A closer study of the text of the Vatican manuscript reveals that, while the first section of the commentary on Psalms 1–50 is introduced as the work of Daniel of Salah, the second section is attributed to Daniel of Tella.[20] It appears that the author was known by both of the titles and the content of the text certainly suggests that the two Daniels were in fact one and the same.[21]

---

14 See Add 17187, fol. 113 and BL Add 17125, fol. 96.

15 Vatican Syr. 155, fol. 279.

16 M.H. GOSHEN-GOTTSTEIN, *Syriac Manuscripts in the Harvard College Library. A Catalogue*, Harvard Semitic Studies 23, Cambridge Mass. 1979, p. 79; G. DIETTRICH, *Eine jakobitische Einleitung in den Psalter*, Giessen, 1901.

17 MINGANA, *Catalogue*, I, col. 339, Mingana Syr. 147, fols. 91–161.

18 J. P. M. van der PLOEG, *The Christians of St. Thomas in South India and Their Syriac Manuscripts*, Bangalore 1983, pp. 90–91. As these manuscripts appear to contain the commentary to the whole of the Psalter, their size suggests that it is indeed the shorter version, also attributed to Daniel of Tella, of the Harris and Mingana Manuscripts.

19 MINGANA, *Catalogue*, col. 339.

20 Compare the heading of the first section with that of the second in Vat. Syr. 155: (fol. 263R)

ܟܬܒ ܠܗ ,ܐܬܠ ܕܥܒܕ ܟܪܣܛܘܢ ܟܬܒ ܒ ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ
(fol. 282R)

ܟܠܗ ܠܗ ܕܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ . ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ:.

21 M.H. SIMPKIN, *The Psalm-Commentary of Dionysius Bar Salibi*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Melbourne 1974, has noted sufficient agreement between this shorter form of Daniel's Psalms commentary and the twelth century commentary on the same work by

monasteries in the region, a number of which may be dated to the late fifth or early sixth centuries.[28]

To turn to the other correspondent, it is necessary to face west from Salah and travel to the region of Syria Secunda. Vööbus comments that "All the important monasteries gravitated towards Apamea",[29] and in one area of this region, namely Kaphra de-Barta, were to be found two of importance. One of these was the convent of "Eusebios", included in lists of significant monastic centres. It is this community which Vööbus associates with the abbot John's correspondence in BL Add 17,187. It seems clear that his request for an interpretation of the Psalms arose in a monastic context, and in all likelihood was addressed to a similar place.

The sheer distance between the districts of Apamea and Tur 'Abdin raises the question of the relationship between Johanan and Daniel, although there is evidence that monks travelled widely between monasteries. Gertrude Bell records that monasticism began in Tur 'Abdin with the foundation of the monastery of Mar Augen on Mount Izla by an Egyptian monk, St. Eugenius.[30] There is also a tradition that the monastery of Mar Ya'qub the Intercessor, which is actually to be found in the village of Salah, was established by an Egyptian monk of that name who travelled from Alexandria to Amida and then to Tur 'Abdin.[31] Similar evidence exists for movement in the opposite direction. Vööbus records the tradition of the establishment of the Monastery of Mar Bassos in Phoenecia Secunda in the late fifth century. According to certain legends it was one Rabban David from the monastery of Mar Bassos in Tur 'Abdin who founded the convent of the same name near the city of Homs (Emesa).[32] Although there is some question about the authenticity of this account, provided in fact by the monks of the monastery themselves, it does indicate the existence of communication over substantial distances.

---

28 A. VÖÖBUS, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient: A Contribution to the History of Culture in the Near East*, II: *Early Monasticism in Mesopotamia and Syria*, CSCO 197 (Subsidia 17), Louvain 1960, p. 225.

29 VÖÖBUS, *Asceticism*, p. 250.

30 G. BELL, *The Churches and Monasteries of the Tur 'Abdin*, with introduction and notes by M. Mundell MANGO, London 1982, p. 37.

31 BELL, *Churches*, p. 37. This evidence for a monastic community at Salah can either strengthen or weaken the certainty of Daniel's association with this particular town of Salah. It is surprising that, if Daniel was indeed a presbyter and the abbot of an established convent in the town whose name he bears, no more specific reference was made to this in the correspondence, especially as such detail is ascribed to the abbot John.

32 VÖÖBUS, *Asceticism*, p. 255.

It is reasonable however to assume that there was some specific reason for the one choosing the other to be the author of the required commentary. In fact, the correspondence with Daniel includes specific references to why Johanan sought another commentary and to the form that it should take; an explanation that would go beyond the literal and simple interpretation with which he was already familiar. For, in chronological terms, an interpreter of the Psalms in the sixth century was already following a tradition in which many church fathers has participated. Origen, Athanasius, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, all had written homilies on this important section of scripture. These included interpretations not only from within the Antiochene tradition, where the literal and historical interpretation was of primary importance, but also from the school of Alexandrian exegetes who sought to enhance the meaning of scripture through an allegorical approach. At least two of these, the fourth century works of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Athanasius of Alexandria, representative of the Antiochene and Alexandrian traditions respectively, are known furthermore to have existed in a Syriac translation.

That Mar Johanan, within his Syrian setting, was familiar already with the literal interpretation is hardly surprising. The region must have come to some degree under the influence of the exegetical tradition of the Antiochene school. What is more interesting is why he sought a different approach from that which followed the fourth century teachings of Diodore of Tarsus. One explanation may lie in the tendency within the Syrian church for the distinction between exegetical methods to reflect theological differences as well.[33] With the strong association between Theodore of Mopsuestia, and the supporters of the diophysite creed who followed the teachings of Nestorius, those who held monophysite views may have been reluctant to adopt the interpretations of the *mephashqana*. As there is little doubt, despite Daniel of Salah's misleading inclusion by Assemani amongst the orthodox writers,[34] that he adhered to a monophysite christology,[35] this may have at least contributed to Mar Johanan's request.

---

33 While one must proceed with caution when taking literary styles as an indicator of theological tendencies, the schools of Edessa and Nisibis are certainly examples of an indoctrination where the only exegesis accepted was literal and the preferred theology was that of Nestorius: VÖÖBUS, *History of the School of Nisibis*, CSCO 266 (Subsidia 26), Louvain, 1965.

34 Remembering of course that Assemani misidentified Daniel of Salah, associating him with a Daniel who corresponded with Jacob of Edessa in the eighth century; see *Bibliotheca*, I, p. 495.

35 This is clear from his exegesis. The second memra on Psalm 2 refers to "the manifestation of God the Word in the flesh ... [who] willingly became man,

This association of a Psalms-interpreting Daniel and the towns of both Salah and Tella dhe-Mauzelath has been variously dealt with in the secondary material. Only Mingana has sought to distinguish the two with the majority preferring to locate Daniel in Salah at least during the period when the commentary was written. The title Daniel of Tella appears to have come from a later stage of his life with both Wright and Patriarch Barsawm recording the tradition that Daniel was bishop of Tella dhe-Mauzelath at some time probably after the completion of his commentary in 542.[22]

There is some support for this view within the manuscript of the first volume of the longer work. Although the work commences with only a brief introduction, it concludes with some correspondence between the author and the abbot John of the convent of Mar Eusebios at Kephar Barta in the region of Apamea.[23] It was at the request of Abbot John that Daniel wrote the commentary, and the second letter deals with this while the first contains Daniel's response. Here Daniel is addressed as "Mar Daniel, presbyter and abbot", and although apparently considered to be a more worthy figure than Mar Johanan, "the lesser presbyter and abbot" who addresses him, evèn allowing for the rhetoric of formal correspondence, there is still no suggestion that he was the bishop of Salah at that time.[24]

Dionysius bar SALIBI to propose that Daniel of Salah/Tella is indeed the "Daniel" cited as a source by bar Salibi.

22 WRIGHT, *History*, p. 159; van der PLOEG here cites Patriarch Barsawm who records in his *History of Syriac Literature*, Qamisle 1967, p. 91, a tradition whereby Daniel was a native (and later the bishop) of Tella rather than Salah; A. PALMER, *Monk and Mason on the Tigris Frontier*, Cambridge 1990, p. 149 suggests that the title "of Salah", rather than designating him as a native of Salah, refers to his secondary but more significant relationship with his monastery.

23 There is further evidence to identify Abbot John of Mar Eusebios in a manuscript, apparently written in A.GR. 846 (C.E. 535), by one John of Kura of the Antiochians, who compiled a record of the Acts of the second Council of Ephesus held in C.E. 449. There is a colophon which states that the work was done "in the monastery of Eusebius, in the village of Kaphra de-Bartha ... in the time of John the abbot of the same monastery" (MINGANA, *Catalogue*, I, cols. 1098–1099, cf. WRIGHT, *Catalogue*, DCCCCV (BL Add 14530), p. 1027). See also I. E. RAHMANI, *Studia Syriaca*, Monte Libano 1904, p. 61, who notes that the Abbot John of "Cphar-Birtae" was amongst those condemned by the Emperor Justin for opposing the rulings of Chalcedon.

24 It may well be from Assemani that the tradition of Daniel as bishop of Salah has begun. It is this title which Assemani favours, no doubt following the designation he cites from the manuscript Latin. Vatic. 6429, p. 133, "Danielis Episcopi Salahani" (*Bibliotheca*, I, p. 495).

There is little more by way of biographical information provided by this manuscript. The date of composition is not recorded, and then somewhat obscurely, until the second volume where the memra on Psalm 83 includes an attack on the Nestorians and their conspiracies which Daniel records as taking place during the reign of Theodosius "until *this* year which is the year eight hundred and fifty-three" (C.E. 541/42).[25] This clearly disproves the identification of the author offered by Assemani who assumed that this Daniel was the one who corresponded with Jacob of Edessa in the eighth century.[26]

However, by taking this date together with the information which does exist, there is the basis for at least suggesting a context for the composition of the commentary. From the names of the author and his correspondent, the reader is provided with some geographical location for the writing of the commentary and also the setting in which it was to be used. There is also some detail about the kind of work that was required and why Daniel was the chosen author. So, from what we do know, the abbot of a monastery in Syria Secunda wrote to a certain presbyter and abbot (if not bishop) many miles distant in Mesopotamia.

While there is some debate about the actual location of the town of Salah, there is a consensus that it lay on the easternmost border of the Roman Empire in Mesopotamia Secunda. Wright's description of a location "north-east of Midyad in Tur 'Abdin"[27] is perhaps the most attractive as, according to tradition, it would not be surprising to find someone described as a priest and abbot in this region. By the middle ages at least Tur 'Abdin had become a centre of Syrian monasticism, and historians over the centuries have numbered its monasteries at anything from forty-six to eighty. Arthur Vööbus describes this area, literally named the "mountain of the servants", as a "paradise of Syrian Monks", and lists many of the more notable

---

25 BL Add 14679, fol. 104R.

26 It appears to be G. BICKELL in *Conspectus rei Syrorum Literariae*, Münster 1871, who first refuted Assemani's identification. His lead was followed by Rahmani, who published an excerpt from the commentary on Ps. 83 in *Studia*, ch. 6. Interestingly the manuscript he used, described as "Ex nostrae bibliothecae codice recentiori", is clearly different from the text found in BL Add 14679; see p. 61.

27 WRIGHT, *History*, p. 159, cf. ASSEMANI, *Bibliotheca*, I, p. 495 where Salah is described as between Mardin and Nisibis: PALMER, *Monk*, p. 150 n. 4, where in Barsawm's opinion it is located near Abu Kemal.

The continuing controversy over the person and nature of Jesus Christ had a profound effect on the Syrian churches. The rulings of the two councils of Ephesus had already caused the followers of the Nestorian diophysite creed to turn to the East[36] and the further condemnation of Nestorius' teaching by the Council of Chalcedon compounded this situation. For those who had followed the teachings of Eutyches the situation was no better. The rift between the new "orthodox" church of Constantinople and the disenfranchised sees of Syria seems to have been beyond repair, especially as the religious controversy soon became allied to nationalist feeling.[37] In Antioch, although the ecclesiastical authorities conformed to the new orthodoxy, many of both the clergy and the laity continued to adhere to the monophysite doctrine and turned away from the leadership of Byzantium.

By the middle of the sixth century the monophysite followers of the exiled patriarch Severus, traditionally under the leadership of Jacob Baradaeus, would establish a separate monophysite church. The city of Antioch would find itself supporting two sees, that of the orthodox church of the Byzantine Empire, and the new monophysite church which now oriented itself not so far east as the Nestorians before them had done, but certainly east of Constantinople into Syria. It becomes apparent that the commentary of Daniel of Salah was produced within a church which was steadily becoming the enemy of the state in which it existed.

It is quite possible that John and Daniel were aware of one another in the common ecclesiastical context of the developing west Syrian church. Frend comments that the appointments made to "the new opposition bishoprics" under Jacob Baradaeus were "predominantly from among monks of great Syrian houses".[38] In such an environment, where natives of Amida and Tella were being appointed to the sees of Ephesus and Antioch,[39] it is not unlikely that abbots in Apamea knew interpreters in Salah, if not personally, then by reputation.

How far then can the commentary that Abbot John received from Daniel be seen to reflect the developments of its sixth century west Syrian environment? On the one hand it appears to be a work of some originality.[40]

---

he who was co-natural with the Father (ܗܘ ܕܡܫܘܐ ܠܐܒܐ ܥܡ)": BL Add 17187, fol. 4.

36 A.S. ATIYA, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, London 1968, p. 246–252.

37 W.H.C. FREND, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, Cambridge 1972, p. 287.

38 FREND, *Rise*, p. 286.

39 Ibid. n. 6.

40 This is to the extent that random memras have been compared with the homilies on and interpretations of the Psalms by Augustine, Athanasius of

There is no acknowledgment on the part of the author of the sources consulted and indeed no evidence in the text that his interpretations slavishly follow those of an earlier work. Yet there are undeniably traditions within which he works.

He is familiar with the historical traditions of the early church. He reflects on an apostolic succession whereby the gospel passed from the four evangelists to the church leaders, Paul and Peter in Rome and James in Jerusalem, and then throughout the East as far as Persia and Armenia through the teachings of Thomas, Bartholomew and Addai.[41] The apostolate and the throne, he tells the reader in Psalm 36, was given "to Simon who was crucified head downwards" for the sake of the Lord.[42] His theological preferences are revealed through the lists of church figures and doctrines he condemns. The memra on Psalm 83 includes a catalogue of "heretics" to illustrate the tribes who conspired against God and Israel in that psalm.[43]

Cowe has already commented on Daniel's use of natural history to add to his explanation of "divine Science".[44] The adoption of the tale of the Phoenix as an image of the resurrection is indeed an example of this to which at least may be added the astronomical formations which are presented in association with a treatise on the celestial hierarchy[45] and also the explanation of the instinctive conflict between the hart and the serpent.[46]

However it is most often to scripture that Daniel turns for his explanation of the psalms. He admits for consideration the variance in meaning between the Hebrew and Greek versions. In the memra on Psalm 29 at verse 6 he compares the "Hebrew" text, where the Lord makes Lebanon and Sirion dance like calves, with that of the "Greek" where they are broken to pieces. Not surprisingly it is the latter that he prefers because it is not only in better agreement with the remainder of the psalm but also allows a further

---

Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrysostom, the contemporary sixth-century Latin writer Cassiodorus and the later work of Isodad of Merw. An exhaustive comparison of the content of Daniel's commentary with those which precede him has yet to be completed.

41 Mem. 24, BL Add 17187, fols. 67–68. This account is used to illustrate Ps. 24: 2 by the image of the apostles as the rivers with which the Lord has furnished the earth.

42 Mem. 36, BL Add 17187, fol. 99R; cf. EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. 3:1

43 Mem. 83, BL Add 14679, fols. 103–104.

44 COWE, "Daniel," p. 159.

45 Mem. 19, BL Add 17187, fol. 55.

46 Mem. 42, BL Add 17187, fol. 112.

explanation based on Exodus 32: 20 where the calf is likened to "the calf which was broken to pieces in the desert by the blessed Moses".[47]

The method of interpretation that emerges from Daniel's exegesis of the Psalms reflects the traditions which preceded him. There is no doubt that the historical authorship of David is recognised in the Antiochene fashion and much of the first part of each memra is devoted to associating the message of the psalm with the historical events of David's life. The reader is however continually invited not only to consider the meaning of the Psalms in relation to the narrative of Samuel and Kings, but to bring to their understanding the spirit of prophecy; which doubles the meanings three times and describes the invisible by means of the visible.[48] Most often he invites the reader to use the text of the psalm to consider the spiritual meanings[49] of the words which were originally uttered by David but now serve to recall Adam and Eve; the patriarchs and Moses; Saul, Jonathan and Absolom; Solomon and the prophets; Daniel and the three young men in Babylon; the four evangelists and the apostles; time and time again the great and blessed Paul and of course Immanuel himself.

It is well established, not the least by the number of commentaries that were already in existence by the middle of the sixth century, that the Book of Psalms was an integral part of both public worship and private devotion and this fondness was most particularly expressed in the monastic environment.[50] As such it is not surprising that Mar Johanan requested yet another interpretation. A more exhaustive examination of the content of the entire commentary would allow greater comment on how specifically the work of Daniel of Salah reflected the environment in which it was created. Thus far alone it is still possible to propose that the psalms commentary of Daniel of Salah is *great* in terms other than size. Standing, as it seems to do, as the oldest example of a psalms commentary originally composed in Syriac it makes an important contribution not only to the tradition of Psalms' interpretation within the west Syrian church but also in the wider context of scriptural interpretation.

---

47 Mem. 29, BL Add 17187, fol. 79R.
48 Mem. 2, BL Add 17187, fol. 4; Mem 24, BL Add 17187, fol. 67V.
49 Mem. 7, BL Add 17187, fol. 18V.
50 VÖÖBUS, *Asceticism*, p. 289.

HISTORIANS AND THE EARLY CHURCH: 4

ELEVENTH-CENTURY REFORMERS' VIEWS OF CONSTANTINE

John Cowdrey / St. Edmund Hall, Oxford

In the seventeenth century, John Milton had no difficulty in marshalling later medieval testimony, notably that of Dante, Petrarch, and Ariosto, for his contention that "Constantine marred all in the church". It was an opinion that had been gaining ground since Bernard of Clairvaux had inveighed against the laws that daily resounded in the Lateran palace as being those of Justinian not Christ, and against the trappings of papal power which made the pope the successor not of Peter but of Constantine.[1] The popes of the reforming days of the second half of the eleventh century had thought differently, as had those at Rome and elsewhere who propagated their cause. For them, Constantine was *vir religiosissimus Constantinus primus*, and his age was epitomised as the *pii Constantini tempora*. Two periods were looked back to as golden ages of the early church. One was that of the early church of Jerusalem in the Acts of the Apostles, chapters 2: 42–47 and 4: 32–35, in which the company of those who believed was of one heart and soul. The other was the age of Christian emperors of whom Constantine was the first and towering exemplar; it was ended by the miseries of the Lombard invasion of Italy, although Pope Gregory the Great harvested its spiritual and ecclesiastical fruit for the benefit of a future age that might aspire to renovate its pristine excellence. In this paper I aim to do two things: first, to give some account of the image of Constantine which was transmitted from his own age to that of popes like Gregory VII and Urban II and their supporters, and secondly to consider how, as a consequence, the later eleventh–century reformers presented an emperor who seemed to meet their standard of what an emperor should be and do.

A legend of the most religious Constantine was quick to begin. In the East, it was encouraged by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea's *Vita Constantini*,

---

1 J. MILTON, *Of Reformation in England*, in *The Works of John Milton*, 3/1, New York 1931, pp. 26–27; St. BERNARD, *De consideratione*, 1, 4, 5; 4, 3, 6, in: *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, 3: *Tractatus et opuscula*, ed. J. LECLERCQ & H.M. ROCHAIS, Rome 1963, pp. 399, 453. For further discussion, see H.E.J. COWDREY, "The Gregorian Papacy, Byzantium, and the First Crusade," in J.D. HOWARD-JOHNSTON (ed.). *Byzantium and the West c.850–c.1200*, Amsterdam 1988, pp. 145–169, esp. 145–147.

or, better, his Εἰς Κωνσταντῖνον τὸν βασιλέα, for he was selective, declaring it to be his intention to record only the pious acts of the emperor.[2] This he did. However, there was no Latin translation until the sixteenth century; in the West, Eusebius' *Life* remained virtually unknown. The disregard may have helped the legend which Eusebius initiated to grow there. For, according to Eusebius, Constantine sought baptism only at the end of his life; he received it in Asia Minor, near Nicomedia and, in fact, at the hand of its bishop, another Eusebius, who was not free from the taint of Arianism.[3] The West was not hampered by this record from developing the tradition that Constantine was baptised at Rome, after his conversion, and by the hand of Pope Silvester I. In his addition to his Latin translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, Rufinus of Aquileia adapted Eusebius' story of Constantine's having a vision of a cross in the sky with the angelic commentary: "Constantine, τούτῳ νίκα, quod est, in hoc vince", and added that it was a conversion experience like that of Saul on the Damascus road.[4] He did not mention Constantine's baptism, but the way was prepared for it to become associated with his conversion.

In the Latin West, the two centuries between the time of Rufinus (died 410) and that of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604) saw two lines of development in the record of Constantine.[5] First, a number of Latin authors, especially in historical works, made brief but memorable reference to him. They sometimes drew upon the traditions of the Greek East where, from the late fourth century, he was venerated both in the church's liturgical and homiletic activity and also in court ceremony and state propaganda. But whereas the East tended towards hagiography in the strict sense of regarding him as a saint and as Ἰσαπόστολος, unlike his mother Helena he was never canonised in the West. There, he was built up as an ideal secular ruler who knew his place before God and the clergy, behaving with exemplary piety and humility. The tied epithets and phrases which gathered about him and which were to reverberate to the central middle ages had nothing to do with words like *sanctus* or *beatus*; rather, they expressed his sense of what was due from

---

2 F. WINKELMANN, *Über das Leben des Kaisers Konstantin*, in *Eusebius Werke*, 1/1, *Griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*, Berlin 1975, 1.11, 1–2, p. 20.

3 Ibid. 4, 24–26, pp. 145–164.

4 *Ecclesiastical History*, 9, 8, 15, ed. E. SCHWARTZ & T. MOMMSEN, GCS 9, Leipzig 1903–08, pp. 827–829; cf. *Vita Const.* 1, 28–30, ed. WINKELMANN, pp. 29–30.

5 For a fuller discussion, to which I am much indebted, see A. LINDER, "The Myth of Constantine the Great in the West: Sources and Hagiographical Commemoration," *StMed*, 3rd ser., 16, 1975, pp. 43–95.

the secular to the spiritual: he was *religiosissimus*, *piissimus*, *piae memoriae princeps*, and the like. As Rufinus commented of his victories, "the more religiously and humbly he submitted himself to God, the more widely God subdued all things to him".[6] Constantine reciprocated as a Christian prince should. As Gregory the Great wrote to King Ethelbert of Kent, he recalled the Roman republic from the wicked cults of idols and subjected it, along with himself, to Christ, to whom he altogether converted himself with all peoples subject to him.[7]

His particular deeds and dispositions flowed from this kingly religion and humility. He was credited with building the seven major churches of Rome. According to the *Liber pontificalis* of the early sixth century, he began with the Lateran which it named the *basilica Constantiniana*, and proceeded to the churches of St Peter and St Paul, then to the others and to churches at Ostia and Albano.[8] Another important work was the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita* which, under the name of Cassiodorus, assembled excerpts from the Greek historians Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, and circulated in the medieval West. It referred approvingly to Constantine as the emperor who gave freedom of worship to Christians and who passed laws in their favour.[9] Most praiseworthy of all for the *Historia* and for other Latin sources was Constantine's deportment at the council of Nicaea (325). According to Eusebius of Caesarea, Constantine had there asserted his position, saying that he was also a bishop, ordained by God to oversee whatever is external to the church.[10] But for the *Historia*, he was an exemplar of humility who sat modestly in the bishops' midst, and did so only with their leave.[11] Rufinus had described his humility more graphically and in words upon which the eleventh century would seize. He had been compelled to compose the bickering and strife of the assembled bishops, yet in doing so he addressed them as follows:

> God has appointed you as bishops (*sacerdotes*) and has given you power over us as well; we are therefore rightly judged by you. You, however, cannot

---

6 RUFINUS, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 1, 8, (PL 21, 478).

7 *S. Gregorii Magni Registrum epistularum*, 11, 37, 18–25, ed. D. NORBERG, 2 vols., *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, 140, 140A, Turnholt 1982, II, p. 930.

8 *Le Liber pontificalis*, ed. L. DUCHESNE, 3 vols., Paris 1886–1957, I, pp. 172–184.

9 *Cassiodori-Epiphanii Historia ecclesiastica tripartita*, 1, 9, ed. W. JACOB & R. HANSLIK, *CSEL*, 71, Vienna 1952, pp. 24–29.

10 *Vita Const.* 4, 24, ed. WINKELMANN, p. 128.

11 *Hist. eccles. trip.* 2, 5, ed. JACOB & HANSLIK, pp. 89–92.

> rightly be judged by men. Look, then, to God alone as your judge, for whatever your disputes, they are reserved for his divine hearing. You are appointed by God to be gods on our behalf; it is not right that a man should judge gods but only he of whom it is written, "God stands in the assembly of gods; he judges gods in their midst" (cf. Ps 81: 1 Vg.).[12]

The biblical text was one that Gregory the Great would borrow from Rufinus, with approval for his eulogy of Constantine, when he sought to persuade the Emperor Maurice at Constantinople that emperors should not countenance accusations against bishops, who were to be received with honour, not with judgement.[13] Constantine was an exemplar of something very like what eleventh-century reformers would call the liberty of the church.

The second line of development in the record of Constantine up to the time of Gregory the Great is constituted by the legends which developed about him, about the pope, Silvester I, who was in office at the time of his conversion, and about his mother Helena. This development, in its Latin form, can now only be illustrated, not fully described or discussed. It was manifest in the writings of the historians. Rufinus propagated the story of Constantine's vision of the cross,[14] which the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita* also retailed, although in a variant version that set it, not at Rome before the battle of the Milvian Bridge, but on the Danube frontier.[15] Rufinus further wrote of Helena's visit to Jerusalem, the outcome of which was the legend of the invention of the cross. After a diligent search there, Helena located three crosses, one of which was miraculously disclosed to be that of Christ. She founded a church at Jerusalem on the site where the cross was found; and she sent Constantine not only part of the cross but also nails which were found with it and which her son utilised for bridles for his horses and to decorate a helmet suitable for battle.[16]

More potent than such passages in the historians were longer hagiographical compositions. One of the most influential texts that the post-Constantinian church bequeathed to the middle ages was the *Actus Silvestri*.[17] Originating at Rome between the late fourth and the late fifth

---

12 *Hist. eccles.* 1, 2 (PL 21, 468).
13 *Reg. epist.* 5, 36, 50–64, ed. NORBERG, 1, pp. 305–306.
14 See p. 64 above.
15 *Hist. eccles. trip.* 1, 4, 4–9, ed. JACOB & HANSLIK, pp. 16–17.
16 *Hist eccles.* 1, 7–8 (PL 21, 475–478).
17 The only printed text remains that in B. MOMBRITIUS, *Sanctuarium seu Vitae sanctorum*, new ed., 2 vols., Paris 1910, II, pp. 508–531; Mombritius' compilation of saints' Lives was made c. 1480. The earliest form of the *Actus Silvestri* is often best approached through the citations of

centuries but probably under Pope Siricius (384–99), it circulated very widely in several recensions; with good reason it has been presented as an embodiment of "the Constantinian foundation-legend of Christian Rome".[18] Its main features were as follows. It began by exhibiting Silvester in pagan times as a Christian confessor. Then, pre-dating his becoming pope, it turned to his part in Constantine's conversion. It featured him, not as the holy emperor, so much as the pious and right-minded establisher of the Christian empire.[19] Having been the church's persecutor, he became its protector; once the enemy of Christians, he became their friend.

According to the *Actus Silvestri*, his part in slaughtering Christians had caused his leprosy, to cure which the pagan priests of Rome (*pontifices Capitolii*) told him to bathe in the blood of infants. Moved by their mothers' tears, Constantine drew back, thereby winning a victory over himself which was greater than his victories on the battlefield: "vicit crudelitatem pontificum pietas Romani imperii." A vision of St Peter and St Paul, who were in effect the Christian Dioscori, led him to recall Pope Silvester from exile in hope of another way of cleansing, in return for which he was to restore all churches in the Roman empire and himself to worship the true God. After Silvester explained the Christian faith to him, he did penance and confessed his sins; then the pope baptised him in the baths of the Lateran palace. Thus his soul was cleansed from the filth of sin and his body from leprosy. Henceforth the pagan Capitol gave way to the Christian Lateran as the centre of Roman religion.

---

manuscript sources in the secondary literature. See esp. W. LEVISON, "Konstantinische Schenkung und Silvester-Legende," and "Kirchenrechtliches in den Actus Silvestri," repr. in idem, *Aus Rheinischer und Fränkischer Frühzeit*, Dusseldorf 1948, pp. 390–465, 466–473; E. EWIG, "Das Bild Constantins des Grossen in den ersten Jahrhunderten des abendländischen Mittelalters," *HistJb* 75, 1956, pp. 1–46; R.J. LOENERTZ, "Actus Sylvestri. Genèse d'une légende," *RHE* 70, 1975, pp. 426–439; A. LINDER, "The Myth of Constantine the Great in the West," and idem, "Constantine's 'Ten Laws' Series," in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, 2: *Gefälschte Rechtstexte. Der bestrafte Fälscher, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Schriften*, 33/2, Hanover 1988, pp. 491–507; W. POHLKAMP, "Tradition und Topographie: Papst Silvester I. (314–335) und der Drache vom Forum Romanum," *RQ* 78, 1983, pp. 38–100; idem, "Kaiser Konstantin, der heidnische und der christliche Kult in den Actus Silvestri," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 18, 1984, pp. 357–400; idem, "*Privilegium ecclesiae Romanae pontifici contulit*: Zur Vorgeschichte der Konstantinischen Schenkung," in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, II, pp. 413–490.

18 POHLKAMP, "*Privilegium ecclesiae Romanae pontifici contulit*," p. 425.

19 Ibid, p. 436.

In the octave of his baptism, which was represented as occurring at Easter, Constantine each day issued a law in the church's favour and they were followed by two others. Most were fictitious but all were programmatic for later ages; thus, for example, the law of the fourth day conferred upon the pontiff of the Roman church the privilege that, throughout the Roman world, he was the head of the bishops as the emperor was the head of the judges.[20] It was a recognition by the emperor of the universal jurisdiction of the pope over the bishops. Constantine thereafter founded the basilicas of St Peter's and the Lateran. Some 7,000 people followed Constantine's example by then being baptised. At a meeting with the reluctant senate in the Basilica Ulpia, Constantine discussed the cult of idols. The upshot was that Christian bishops would henceforth enjoy the same privileges as pagan priests, although no religious compulsion was to be applied and conversion was to be voluntary.

In 315, Constantine went on to stage a dispute with Jews about Christ's divinity. The account begins with a fictitious exchange of letters with his allegedly Judaising mother Helena who was in the East and who was urging her son to convert from his new Christianity to Judaism. Constantine set up a debate at Rome between Silvester and twelve rabbis under the presidency of two pagan *iudices dati*. The dispute was settled by a miracle in which Silvester restored to life an animal which the rabbis had slaughtered. It was construed as a victory for the Catholic faith in the city and the world.

In an appendix, the *Actus Silvestri* retailed a story of the subduing of the dragon of the Forum Romanum which, having been accustomed during pagan times to be pacified by monthly feeding by the vestal virgins, was wrathful at its discontinuance since Christianity was recognised. Silvester urged Constantine to stand fast against the pagan custom of appeasing the dragon, and himself successfully bound its mouth after fortifying himself by the name of Christ. Constantine recognised this victory by confirming his own worship of the true God and by proclaiming an age of reconciliation and peace.

Thus, Constantine was celebrated in the West as the founder of a Christian city and empire in which the centre of religion had been transferred from the pagan Capitol to the Christian Lateran, in which a dutiful emperor was committed to the reign of peace, and in which the universal prerogative

---

20 The most satisfactory available version of the laws is LINDER, "Constantine's 'Ten Laws'," pp. 493–497. The law of the fourth day runs, in its original words: "Quarta die privilegium ecclesie Romane pontifici contulit, ut in toto orbe Romano sacerdotes ita hunc caput habeant sicut omnes iudices regem" (p. 494).

of the pope as the true Roman pontiff was recognised to be one of the laws of an emperor who knew the difference between the spiritual and the temporal jurisdictions in the Roman world.

A further expansion of the legends centring upon Constantine may be briefly noticed. It was concerned with the rehabilitation of his mother Helena by means of stories about the invention of the holy cross. It is well illustrated by the so-called *Acts of Judas-Cyriacus* which, having been developed in the East, appear to have been translated into Latin by the end of the sixth century. They later also passed into the Western vernacular languages.[21] Helena's determination to recover the cross of Christ's passion brought her into dispute with the Jews and especially with a certain Judas who, despite the chronological impossibility, was thought to be a brother to the first martyr St Stephen. A combination of threats by burning or starvation and of encouragement by miracle led him to number himself with Stephen and to discover three crosses, one of which was established through a miracle of healing to be that of Christ. Helena resolved to put the cross in a casing of jewels and to set it in a new church on the site of Calvary. Judas was baptised and in due course ordained bishop of Jerusalem. Thereafter, the nails of the passion were also discovered; Helena caused a bridle to be made from them which she sent to Constantine as a pledge of victory and peace.[22] Such legends of the invention of the holy cross and of the dispatch of relics to Constantine reinforced his image as a Christian and victorious ruler; they associated with him the most precious and efficacious of Christian relics.

With regard to the legends of Constantine, the transition from the ancient to the early medieval world marked no break. There was continuity at Rome as in the Latin world at large. Only a few examples can now be given. Perhaps most important of all is one that illustrates continuity at Rome: the so-called *Constitutum Constantini* or the "Donation of Constantine".[23]

---

21 The *Acts* are printed, in an uncritical text, in MOMBRITIUS, *Sanctuarium*, I, pp. 376–379, whence *Acta Sanctorum: May* I, 445–448; for a better text, see J. STRAUBINGER, *Die Kreuzabfindungslegende: Untersuchungen über ihr altchristlichen Fassung mit besonderen Berücksichtigung der syrischen Texte*, Paderborn 1912, pp. 15–49.

22 "Erit autem arma inexpugnabilis contra omnes adversarios. Victoria enim erit regis et pax belli": ed. STRAUBINGER, p. 46.

23 For the text, see *Das Constitutum Constantini (Konstantinische Schenkung): Text*, H. FUHRMANN (ed.), *MGH Fontes iuris Germanici antiqui*, 10, Hanover 1968. Among the enormous secondary literature, I am especially indebted to FUHRMANN, *Einfluss und Verbreitung der pseudoisidorischen Fälschungen, MGH Schriften*, 24/1–3, Stuttgart 1972–74, II, pp. 354–385; also to N. HUYGHEBAERT, "La Donation de Constantin ramenée à ses véritables dimensions," *RHE* 71, 1976, pp. 45–

About this most controversial of documents it must suffice to make a few remarks about the direction of recent study. It was written between the mid-eighth and the mid-ninth century but probably near the earlier date, almost certainly at Rome and by a minor clerk of the Lateran *patriarchium*. In form, it is a privilege from Constantine to Pope Silvester I. However, it lacks a firm structure of *narratio* and *dispositio*. It has more the character of an allocution by Constantine with a single flow of narrative to which dispositive elements are incidental. Whatever its connection with the inception of the papal states, its dispositions about the endowment of Roman churches are grandiose and vague.[24]

It has been well described as not a false diploma but a pseudo-diploma.[25] When read as a whole, its central concern was not the endowment of the papacy but the prerogatives of the Roman church and of the Lateran within that church. From beginning to end, it was a pronouncement of Constantine the right-thinking emperor which expressed in most thoroughgoing terms the Roman church's image of what it was and of what, in the providence of God, it would always be to the end of time.

In the first half, or *confessio*, of the *Constitutum Constantini*,[26] an emperor who was both well disposed — *fidelis, mansuetus, maximus, beneficus* — and prosperous — *pius, felix, victor ac triumphator, semper augustus*[27] — described a conversion experience in terms which followed the relevant part of the *Actus Silvestri*. Having confessed the true faith in which Silvester instructed him, Constantine told of his leprosy, his compunction when advised by the *sacerdotes Capitolii* to bathe in the blood of slaughtered infants, his vision of St Peter and St Paul, his recall of Silvester from exile, his time of penance at the Lateran palace, his baptism there which cleansed his leprosy, and his full grasp of the faith which he had now adopted. The *Constitutum Constantini* emphasised his recognition of the authority of St Peter according to Christ's commission in St Matthew's Gospel.

In the spirit of Constantine's ten laws in the *Actus Silvestri*, according to the *Constitutum Constantini* he went on to exalt the prerogatives of the Roman church and its superiority to his own earthly empire:

> And when I acknowledged what blessed Silvester proclaimed and found myself entirely healed by blessed Peter, with all my governors and the whole senate,

---

69, and idem, "Une légende de fondation: le *Constitutum Constantini*," *Le Moyen Age*, 85, 1979, pp. 177–209.

24 Ed. FUHRMANN, lines 202–209, 261–270, pp. 85–86, 93–94.

25 HUYGHEBAERT, "La Donation de Constantin," p. 52.

26 To line 155, p. 80, in Fuhrmann's edition.

27 Ed. FUHRMANN, lines 4–6, p. 56.

with the nobility and the whole Roman people subject to the majesty of our empire, I thought fit that, as Peter was manifestly appointed vicar of the Son of God upon earth, so also the bishops (*pontifices*) who succeed to (*gerunt vices*) the chief of the apostles should secure from us and from our empire a power and supremacy which rise superior to what seemed to be granted to the earthly clemency of our imperial majesty. For ourselves, we preferred that the chief of the apostles and his vicars should be our powerful advocates (*patronos*) before God. And as our own imperial power is earthly, we determined to venerate and honour his [Peter's] holy Roman church and that the most holy see of blessed Peter should be gloriously exalted above our empire and earthly throne, ascribing to him power, the rank and capacity of majesty, and imperial dignity.[28]

After this pronouncement, which is arguably the key passage of the *Constitutum Constantini*, Constantine ratified Rome's primacy over the other patriarchal sees of all churches in the world, as well as the pope's supreme jurisdiction over Christian worship and the integrity of the faith.[29]

After Constantine thus followed the *Actus Silvestri* in affirming the superiority of the Roman church over all other churches, he went further by affirming that of the Lateran basilica, as well. It was Constantine's own foundation and, in token of the twelve apostles, he had carried on his shoulders twelve baskets of earth when its foundations were laid. It was to be honoured as the head and apex of all churches upon earth.[30] It was dedicated to Christ the Saviour, and the word *salvator* occurs thirteen times in the *Constitutum Constantini*. The insistence upon the Saviour and upon the living and immediate power of St Peter as his vicar served further to reinforce the Lateran's precedence over the pilgrimage basilicas of St Peter and St Paul which Constantine also built; while they sheltered the apostles' dead bodies, the Lateran stood for Peter's living power, in himself and in his vicar the reigning pope.

Constantine went still further in demonstrating his *pietas* to the apostles when, in gratitude for his baptism and cleansing, he transferred the Lateran palace, which he declared to excel all palaces upon earth, to the popes, together with the imperial insignia. Appropriate dignities were transferred from the Roman senate to the Roman clergy. To complete his exhibition of honour to the pope he transferred the centre of his own earthly power to Byzantium, "because," he said, "it was not right that an earthly empire

---

28 Ibid., lines 156–170, pp. 80–82.
29 Ibid., lines 171–187, pp. 82–84.
30 Ibid., lines 188–203, pp. 84–85.

should hold sway where the government (*principatus*) of the bishops and the head of the Christian religion were established by the heavenly emperor".[31]

When read as an allocution placed upon the lips of Constantine which built upon the legends of the *Actus Silvestri* to confirm the prerogatives of the Roman church and to assert the superiority of the spiritual power and its autonomy in religious matters, it is not hard to understand how, far into the middle ages, the *Constitutum Constantini* sustained the image of Constantine as a pious and exemplary emperor.

Legends of Constantine and Helena proliferated in Carolingian times. A critical event for Northern France and the Rhineland was the bringing c. 840 to the abbey of Hautvilliers (dioc. Reims) of the Roman relics of Helena. Within the next ten years, a monk of the abbey named Altmann wrote a *Vita sanctae Helenae* which well illustrates the early medieval picture of Helena and her son.[32] The *Life* begins by comparing the twelve persecutions of Christians between Nero and Diocletian with the twelve plagues in Egypt. Constantine was introduced as the emperor who delivered Christians from such straits. "By the mercy of God," Altmann proclaimed, "he turned the destruction and malice of earlier emperors into peace and goodness; he changed their persecution of Christians into his defence."[33] After his conversion, Constantine resolved to build the church of Christ among all peoples. After his vision of the cross with the accompanying words "O Constantine, in hoc vince", he sent his mother to find the cross. Having found it in Jerusalem, she sent him part of the wood and the nails of the passion.[34] The differences between mother and son which had been a feature of, for example, the *Actus Silvestri* had no place in the *Life*, which stressed the perfect harmony that always prevailed between them while tending to focus the glory upon Constantine.[35] But Helena's sanctity was vindicated.

Legends of Constantine the most pious emperor spread widely in the Latin West. Its hymnody took up the theme of St Helena, sometimes taking in the legend of Judas Cyriacus.[36] Devotion to the holy cross, and the commemoration of its invention, spread across Europe by the early eleventh

---

31 Ibid., lines 274–276, pp. 94–95.
32 *Acta Sanctorum: August* 3, 580–599.
33 *Vita*, cap. 2, 19, p. 586.
34 *Vita*, cap. 2, 27–30, p. 588.
35 *Vita*, caps 3, 33; 5, 50–52, pp. 590, 595–596.
36 For example, the Spanish examples in G.M. DREVES, *Analecta hymnica medii aevi*, 55 vols., Leipzig 1886–1922, XVI, 144–145, nos 238, 241; XXVII, 74–75, no. 38.

century.[37] In sculpture, copies of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius in the Capitol at Rome, which was believed to be of Constantine, spread the image of Constantine the warrior-emperor through wide areas of Europe; at Parthenay-le-Vieux, for example, his bridle with its legendary associations was a prominent feature.[38] No work of art better sums up the perception of Constantine by Romanesque artists than the Stavelot Triptych in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. At the centre is a reliquary of the true cross. Its left wing is devoted to Constantine, and depicts his vision of the cross, his victory at the Milvian Bridge, and his baptism by Pope Silvester. Its right wing balances it with the Helena of the *Acts of Judas Cyriacus*, interrogating the Jews, supervising with Judas' aid the finding of the three crosses, and the miraculous authentication of the cross of Christ.[39] With its equal treatment of mother and son, the Triptych epitomises the legend of the pious emperor as it came down to the age of the Gregorian reform and after.

While the image of Constantine the most pious and Christian emperor was thus permeating Latin Europe by way of legend and devotion, it was also finding its way into the sources of the church's law. It was of the utmost importance for the dissemination of the *Constitutum Constantini*, and ultimately for its interpretation, that, at about the time that Altmann of Hautvilliers was writing his *Vita sanctae Helenae*, it was included in the Pseudo-Isidorian Decrees, in some texts fully but sometimes only the *confessio* without the *donatio* that followed.[40] It was given its apposite place amongst documents allegedly relating to the council of Nicaea (325). It was prefaced by a letter attributed to Pope Miltiades (310–14) which, in some manuscripts, has the inscription *De primitiva ecclesia et sinodo Nicena*.[41] The letter referred to Constantine as *vir religiosissimus*; it praised him for recognising the Christian religion and for instituting the building and endowment of churches. He duly honoured St Peter. By an anachronism,

---

37 See esp. A. FROLOW, *La Relique de la vraie croix: recherches sur le développement d'un culte*, Paris 1961; idem, *Les Reliquaires de la vraie croix*, Paris 1965.

38 See esp. J. ADHÉMAR, *Influences antiques dans l'art du moyen âge français*, London 1939, pp. 207–16 and plate 63; C. BROOKE, *The Twelfth Century Renaissance*, London 1969, p. 15 and illustrations 2–4.

39 FROLOW, *La Relique*, pp. 335–336 no. 347; W VOELKLE, in the exhibition catalogue *The Stavelot Triptych: Mosan Art and the Legend of the True Cross*, New York 1980, pp. 9–25 and illustrations 1–9.

40 *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae et Capitula Angilramni*, ed. P. HINSCHIUS, Leipzig 1863, pp. 249–254; cf. Fuhrmann's comments, *Einfluss und Verbreitung*, II, pp. 365–374.

41 Ed. HINSCHIUS, pp. 274–279.

Miltiades was made to praise Constantine's pronouncement at the council of Nicaea as reported by Rufinus, in which he declared the bishops to stand superior to all human jurisdiction.[42] When introducing the canons of Nicaea, Pseudo-Isidore cited Isidore of Seville's comment that the canons of general councils began from the time of Constantine who had given Christians the opportunity of free assembly. Pseudo-Isidore commented that the decision of the episcopal council about Arius was brought to Constantine, who honoured it as if brought from God himself.[43]

The eleventh-century reform papacy and its advocates inherited this eulogistic estimate of Constantine which, through the massive legendary tradition that gathered around him, was formed over some seven hundred years. Pope Leo IX (1049-54) and his circle made much of it in their dealings with Constantinople in the years 1053 and 1054. It was a useful propaganda point that the reigning Byzantine emperor, Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-54) bore the name of the great Constantine himself. The letter which, early in 1054, Leo's legate Cardinal Humbert of Moyenmoutier, who had probably drafted it, took to the emperor addressed him as the successor of great Constantine in blood, name and empire. Constantine was *ille primus et religiosissimus imperator*, and *ille mirabilis vir*. The present inheritor of his name was exhorted to manifest the constancy which it signified by upholding all that his forebear had done to establish and defend what rightfully belonged to the apostolic see of Rome.[44] When Humbert sought to refute the customs of the Grecks about fasting, he referred to Pope Silvester I as the "spiritual father" of the great Emperor Constantine who had ordered matters as was right.[45] It was in line with this

---

42 See pp. 65--66 above; Pseudo-Isidore's use of RUFINUS, *Hist. eccles.* at HINSCHIUS, p. 256, should also be noticed.

43 Ed. HINSCHIUS, pp. 254, 257; cf. ISIDORE of SEVILLE, *Etymologiarum libri XX*, 6, 16, 2–6, ed. W.M. LINDSAY, 2 vols., Oxford 1911, not paginated. Pseudo-Isidore also placed at the head of his collection of papal decretals a forged *Excerpta quaedam ex synodalibus gestis sancti Silvestri papae* which began with an account of the council of Nicaea held "temporibus sancti Silvestri papae et Constantini piissimi Augusti" (ed. HINSCHIUS, p. 449).

44 C. WILL, *Acta et scripta quae de controversiis ecclesiae Graecae et Latinae saeculo undecimo composita extant*, Leipzig & Marburg 1861, pp. 85–89, no. 3, esp. pp. 86a, 88a (= PL 143, 777–781, no. 103, esp. cols 778AB, 779D--780A).

45 *Dialogus*, cap. 6 (WILL, *Acta et scripta*, pp. 93--126 no. 5, at p. 97ab = PL 143, 929–974, at col. 957A). For Silvester and the Saturday fast, see *Actus Silvestri*, MOMBRITIUS, *Sanctuarium*, II, 510, lines 1–15, but I have not been able to trace a source for Humbert's citation.

heightening of the prerogatives of Rome that, in Leo IX's days, there began to be used at Rome a lightly but pointedly revised version of the *Constitutum Constantini*.[46] According to it, Constantine did not, as in earlier versions, distinguish the four patriarchal sees of the East as being special (*precipuas*); moreover, Constantinople was relegated to the fourth place below Alexandria, Antioch, and even Jerusalem.[47]

The most important document of this period is a long letter of Pope Leo IX, in which Humbert's hand is probably to be detected, to Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople and Archbishop Leo of Ochrida.[48] In form, it was the pope's reply to a letter which the archbishop had addressed to the Apulian bishop John of Trani about the errors of Latin Christians. It is more than unlikely that the pope's letter, commonly referred to as his *Libellus*, reached Constantinople in either 1053 or 1054; but it was of fundamental and lasting significance in the West, not least for Western perceptions of Constantine and his legacy to the church of which it was eulogistic. It offered a sharp and searching, if somewhat unstructured, examination of where authority in Christendom resided. According to H.G. Krause's analysis, the *Libellus* comprises two main sections: first, a rebuttal as themselves heretical of the arguments which Leo ascribed to the two Eastern archbishops (caps 5–22); and secondly, a vindication of the relationship of Rome and Constantinople as being that of mother and daughter (caps 23–36). The overriding concern was to vindicate the *regale sacerdotium* of the apostolic see.[49] In Krause's words, "the nature of the papal power was such that it had both a priestly and a kingly character. The supreme priestly power (*summi sacerdotii privilegium*) was derived from Peter's power of the keys (*celestis regni gubernacula*) and from his power to bind and loose (as in Matt. 16: 19); the supreme earthly power was derived from the *Constitutum Constantini*. The Emperor Constantine the Great had conferred upon St Silvester and upon all Peter's successors to the end of the world not only imperial power and dignity (*imperialis potestas et dignitas*) but also the imperial insignia and entourage (*infule et ministri imperiales*)".[50]

---

46 FUHRMANN, *Einfluss und Verbreitung*, II, pp. 283–285; idem, *Das Constitutum Constantini*, pp. 15–17, 30–32.

47 Ed. FUHRMANN, lines 171–173, p. 82.

48 WILL, *Acta et scripta*, pp. 65–85, no. 2 (= PL 143, 744–769, no. 100). For this letter, see esp. H.-G. KRAUSE, "Das Constitutum Constantini im Schisma vom 1054," in *Aus Kirche und Reich: Studien zu Theologie, Politik und Recht im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Friedrich Kempf*, ed. H. MORDEK, Sigmaringen 1983, pp. 131–158.

49 Cap. 13, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, p. 72a (= PL 143, 752D).

50 "Das Constitutum Constantini," p. 138.

In the second section of the *Libellus*, Constantine had demonstrated that Constantinople was Rome's daughter church when he was the agent of the Roman and apostolic see in reviewing both the customs and the very physical walls of the Eastern city.[51] It was, however, in the first section that the *Libellus* made most of Constantine. There was much discussion of how heresy had been resisted in the early church, and of the active and critical role of St Peter and his successors in upholding the faith. In its light, the archbishops were castigated for their violation of the principle that no one should pass judgement upon the apostolic see.[52] The *Libellus* called in testimony Silvester's decree as recorded in Pseudo-Isidore, where it was said to be passed "with the approval of his spiritual son and most religious Emperor Constantine with the whole Nicene synod", that the supreme see of Rome should be judged by no one; then it cited from the *Actus Silvestri* Constantine's law of the fourth day after his baptism, that bishops should everywhere have the pope for their head as judges had the king for theirs.[53]

Constantine thus met with approval for upholding the pope's spiritual and judicial power. He did so, as well, by making proper provision for the pope's temporal power. The *Libellus* was concerned to establish a duality of the powers of pope and emperor, and to vindicate the superiority of the former. In so doing, it safeguarded two principles of which Constantine was claimed to be the praiseworthy upholder. In line with his law of the fourth day it allowed that bishops and kings each had their proper sphere, and it cited with approval a reply of Constantine to his mother Helena to the effect that it was by lay princes that God gave his laws to the world.[54] Secondly, the

---

51 "... nunquid enim Romana et apostolica sedes, quae per evangelium genuit Latinam ecclesiam in occidente, mater non est Constantinopolitanae ecclesiae in oriente, quam per gloriosum filium suum Constantinum et nobiles sapientesque Romanos non tantum moribus sed et muris studuit reparare?": cap. 23, cf. cap. 28; WILL, *Acta et scripta*, pp. 78ab, 80b (= PL 143, 760D–761A, 763B–D).

52 Cap. 7, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, p. 68b (= PL 143, 748CD).

53 Cap. 10, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, p. 70b (= PL 143, 551AB); cf. HINSCHIUS, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, p. 248; LINDER, "Constantine's 'Ten Laws'," p. 494.

54 After citing Rom. 13: 1–2 and Prov. 8: 15, Humbert continued: "Quod etiam saepe dictus Augustus Constantinus perspicacis animae vivacitate deprehendit, et matri suae religiosae Helenae inter nonnulla sic rescripsit: 'Qui moderatur saecula, et disponit totius mundi suffragia, quibus alimur et sustentamur, per se quidem spirantia vivificat, sed per pectora principum sua iura saeculis dictat'": cap. 12, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, pp. 71b–72a (= PL 143, 772CD). Humbert cited the *Actus Silvestri:* MOMBRITIUS, *Sanctuarium*, II, p. 515, lines 22–25.

Libellus took care to rule out any suggestion that popes derived even their temporal power from an absolute imperial gift: Constantine had dutifully restored to God's ministers in the West a trust that he had himself only temporarily received.[55] With these two caveats, the *Libellus* cited at length the *Constitutum Constantini* in order to warrant the pope's temporal power in the West which complemented his spiritual power. After referring to Christ's commission to St Peter, it invoked the general purport of Constantine's privilege in order to exhibit how, as *prudentissimus terrenae monarchiae princeps*, he had conceded to the popes to the end of time not only a prestigious imperial power and dignity but also the specific reality of the imperial insignia and entourage; for he deemed it inappropriate that those whom the divine majesty had set over a heavenly empire should be subject to any earthly one.[56] Later on, the *Libellus* reproduced verbatim extensive portions, in the newly revised version, of the dispositive part, or *donatio*, of the *Constitutum Constantini* which, it was pointed out, Constantine had himself deposited upon the body of St Peter.[57] The purpose of the citation was to show that Constantine had humbly and gladly recognised the special dignity of the Roman church. He had furnished the popes with abundant buildings, with ample endowments, with human agents, and with the eloquent symbols of empire.[58]

By thus appealing to the *Constitutum Constantini*, Pope Leo sought to vindicate the temporal lordship of the apostolic see as an integral part of its *regale sacerdotium*. Negatively, it established its immunity from any temporal *dominium*; positively, it established its claim to lordship over Rome and the *patrimonium Petri*. There is much to warrant Krause's conclusion that, in the context of events in 1054, Leo sought not only to refute the errors of the eastern archbishops but also to secure the help of the Eastern emperor Constantine IX Monomachus in recovering from the Normans in South Italy the lands that his eponymous ancestor had conferred upon the church.[59] However this may be, by citing only the dispositive section of the *Constitutum Constantini* and by making it the Magna Carta of

---

55 "Et tamen imperialis celsitudo hoc totum quod potuit effecit, quando tota devotione quidquid a Domino acceperat, eidem in ministris suis reddidit": cap. 12, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, p. 71b (= PL 143, 742C).

56 Cap. 12, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, p. 71b (= PL 143, 752B).

57 Cap. 13, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, p. 72a (= PL 143, 757A); cf. *Const.*, ed. FUHRMANN, lines 293–295, p. 97.

58 Caps 13–15, WILL, *Acta et scripta*, pp. 72a–14b, = PL 143, 753B–756A, citing *Const.*, ed. FUHRMANN, lines 157–187, 214–300, pp. 80–84, 86–96.

59 "Das Constitutum Constantini," pp. 138–141.

the pope's claim to temporal lordship, Leo was beginning to depict the document as the title deed of the Roman church to its property. But it formed only part of an as yet tightly knit complex of respects in which Constantine had duly provided for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the apostolic see as the head of the Christian church in a Christian empire.

The propagandists of the early reform papacy continued to express in the West the praise for Constantine that Leo and Humbert had directed to the East. This is true of Humbert himself. In his *Adversus simoniacos*, he repeatedly praised *maximus Constantinus* for his measures on behalf of the Christian church at the time of the council of Nicaea. He had wrested away the privileges that earlier emperors had given to pagan priests and shrines, and he had zealously diverted them from superstition to religion and to the benefit of Christian churches and clergy. He thereby set an example to future emperors in so far as they were right-minded.[60] In a remarkable chapter, Humbert recalled his own talks at Constantinople with the Emperor Constantine Monomachus. They established that, for all the errors that fraught the Constantinopolitan empire, neither its emperor nor its laymen presumed to meddle with the disposal of churches or with ecclesiastical ordinations or resources; these had been at the disposal of metropolitans and other churchmen ever since the days of Constantine. In effect, he was a pattern anti-simoniac who had made pronouncements of which catholics should ever be mindful. Humbert cited at length from Pseudo-Isidore the second letter attributed to Pope Melchiades about the exemption of bishops from human jurisdiction, about the freedom of Christians to build and endow churches, about his own church-building at Rome, and about his own vacation of Rome in order that it might be under the unfettered rule of Peter and his successors.[61] As presented to the West no less than to the East, Humbert's Constantine was a pattern emperor, especially in his recognition that the church should enjoy freedom from lay control.

Humbert's contemporary at Rome, Cardinal Peter Damiani, was similarly laudatory in his two substantial references to Constantine. Peter was an admirer of the Emperor Henry III (1039–56) for his campaign against simony. In his *Liber gratissimus* (1052), he said that Henry had won a victory over the enemies of the catholic church which was like that of Constantine, who had crushed the dogma of the Arian sect by the arms of the orthodox faith, and had championed that faith against an Arian assault upon

---

60 *Humberti cardinalis Libri III adversus simoniacos*, 1, 1; 2, 37, ed. F. THANER, *MGH Libelli de Lite*, 1, pp. 104, 185. The first two books were written by 1057, and the third by 1060.

61 *Adv. sim.* 3, 8, pp. 206–209.

the church's unity.[62] In his *Disceptatio synodalis* (1062), Peter Damiani made his spokesman for the Roman church appeal to the *Constitutum Constantini*, by which Constantine accorded to the apostolic see a primacy (*principatus*) over all the churches of the world. He referred to Constantine's building of the basilica of St Peter and the patriarchate of the Lateran, to his resigning his imperial insignia to Silvester and his successors, and to his granting Silvester a perpetual right to the Lateran palace and jurisdiction over the Italian kingdom. He cited the express words of the *Constitutum Constantini* about Constantine's transfer of his empire and royal power to Constantinople. The conclusion that he drew was that the earthly emperor has no power over the Roman church.[63] For Peter Damiani as for Humbert, Constantine was above all the upholder of the prerogatives and the freedom of the apostolic see.

The incidental character of the references to Constantine by Humbert and Peter Damiani should not create the impression that he was little regarded in later eleventh-century Rome. That this was far from the case is apparent from an anonymous pilgrim-guide to the Lateran, usually known as the *Descriptio basilicae Lateranensis*. Like many such guides, it passed through several editions; but, in its original form, it dates from between 1073 and 1118 but probably from soon after 1073; its survival in seven manuscripts indicates that it was widely known.[64]

---

62 *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, no. 40, ed. K. REINDEL, *MGH Die Briefe der Deutschen Kaiserzeit*, 4/1–4, Munich 1983–93, I, p. 503. Peter Damiani's eulogy of Henry III stands in contrast to the denigration of him as *imperator ille nequissimus*, because of his intervention at Rome in 1046, in the anonymous tract *De ordinando pontifice* of 1047/8. Constantine was the first right-thinking witness whom the author summoned to testify against Henry that "he should not have set his hand upon a bishop". Constantine was addressed as "the most religious Emperor Constantine, who obeyed the blessed Pope Silvester and bowed your head for his blessing"; he repeated the words of the Pseudo-Isidorian second letter of Pope Melchiades, that bishops should not be judged by human judgement: lines 183–189, H.H. ANTON, *Der sogenannte Traktat 'De ordinando pontifice'. Ein Rechtsgutachten in Zusammenhang mit der Synode von Sutri (1046)*, Bonn 1982, p. 80; cf. *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, ed. HINSCHIUS, p. 248, cap. 11.

63 *Die Briefe*, no. 89, ed. REINDEL, II, 546–547. *Const.* lines 271–276, cd. FUHRMANN, pp. 94–95, are cited verbatim.

64 The edition of the *Descriptio* in *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, ed. R. VALENTINI & G. ZUCCHETTI, *Fonti per la storia d'Italia*, 81, 88–91, 4 vols., Rome 1940–53, III, pp. 319–373, is based upon its late twelfth-century form. The only printed text in its original form is in D. GEORGI, *De liturgia Romani pontificis in solemni celebratione missarum libri duo*, 3

After advancing the claim of the Lateran to hold dominion and rule over all other churches (*super omnes ecclesias totius orbis terrarum obtinet dominatum et principatum*) and before listing the relics of the Lateran basilica and the chapel of St Lawrence, it gave a brief history of the Lateran which centred upon Constantine. It began with the martyrdoms of Peter and Paul, whose doctrine illuminated a church which the devil attacked through Nero and successive emperors "for three centuries and more", but could not prevail. After this time of testing the faithful by the fire of suffering, God was pleased to raise up Constantine. The story of his conversion is expressly taken from the *Actus Silvestri*, with references to Constantine's initial persecution of Christians, the divine penalty of his leprosy, his humane refusal to shed the blood of innocent babes, his vision of Peter and Paul,[65] his instruction by Pope Silvester, and his baptism and cleansing from leprosy. In return, Constantine granted the pontiff of the Roman church the privilege expressed in his law of the fourth day, that bishops everywhere should have the Roman pontiff for their head and chief as judges had the emperor for theirs. Thus, in Constantine the Roman emperor turned from being the persecutor of Christians to being their peace and protection. Constantine brought greater benefits still: the account of him next turned to the invention of the holy cross, relics of which formed a major part of the Lateran treasure. Citing the historian Sozomen, the author brought in a reference to Constantine's vision of the cross before his battle with Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge and to the angels' words, "Constantine, in hoc vinces".[66] Preoccupied by wars, Constantine charged his mother Helena to seek the true cross at Jerusalem. The account of him ends with a summary, not clearly based upon a specific source, of how Helena discovered the cross and then sent part of its wood, together with the nails of the passion and other Old and New Testament relics, to form the basis of the

---

vols., Rome 1731–44, III, pp. 542–555, no. 14. For the various recensions and a stemma of MSS, see C. VOGEL, "La *Descriptio ecclesiae Lateranensis* du diacre Jean," *Mélanges en l'honneur de Monseigneur Michel Andrieu*, Strasbourg 1956, pp. 457–476; also further comment by H.E.J. COWDREY, "Pope Urban II and the Idea of the Crusade," in *Festschrift für Bernhard Töpfer*, forthcoming.

65 The *Descriptio* claimed that paintings on wood of Peter and Paul in the treasure of the Lateran basilica were those from which Constantine recognised them, and noted other items for which *Constantinus imperator Dei servus* was responsible: GEORGI, *De liturgia*, III, p. 548.

66 The author perhaps adapted the citation of Sozomen in *Hist. eccles. trip.* 1, 4, 7–8, ed. JACOB & HANSLIK, p. 17; see p. 66 above. But he may have used a Latin translation of SOZOMEN, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1, 3, ed. J. BIDEZ, *GCS* 40, Berlin 1960, p. 11.

Lateran treasure. Such was the prevailing view of Constantine at the Lateran basilica which went by his name;[67] no pilgrim to it was left in doubt of the admiration which was deemed to be Constantine's due. One may notice how little it appears to have been derived from the *Constitutum Constantini*, to which the pilgrim guide does not allude.

The greatest of the reforming popes, Gregory VII (1073–85), always remembered that, from boyhood, he had been associated with the household of St Peter and with the Lateran.[68] The references in his letters to Constantine and Silvester are in line with the tradition of the most religious emperor which had come down from antiquity and was recognised during his earlier years by Cardinals Humbert and Peter Damiani. His most revealing references are in the two letters to Bishop Hermann of Metz which he wrote in justification of his sentences of excommunication and deposition of King Henry IV of Germany in 1076 and 1080.[69] In his letter of 1076, Gregory was concerned to refute the suggestion that the royal dignity exceeded the episcopal. Basing himself on the account of Constantine's due modesty at the council of Nicaea in the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita*,[70] Gregory noticed that Constantine took the lowest place among the bishops and approvingly cited the text that "God resists the proud and gives grace to thc humble" (James 4: 6). In his letter of 1081, he reverted to this incident at greater length, now by way of Pope Gregory I's letter to the Emperor Maurice.[71] This time, he placed the emphasis upon Constantine's recognition that the emperor should not pass judgement upon bishops but be judged by them. Gregory made the same point in 1083 to King William I of England who had imprisoned his half-brother Bishop Odo of Bayeux, and held up Constantine as a model whom he should imitate.[72] Later in his second letter to Hermann of Metz, Gregory made clear the limit of the excellence of even the best temporal rulers. He listed the emperors whom the church praised and honoured: first among them was Constantine *pię memorię imperatoris*; they were lovers of righteousness, propagators of the Christian religion, and defenders of churches, yet they had performed no miracles and, unlike most popes, were not numbered among the saints. Within this limitation, Constantine was a model ruler. A further indication was his supposed

---

67 *Gregorii VII Registrum*, 3, 10*a*, ed. E. CASPAR, *MGH Epistolae selectae*, 2, Berlin 1920–23, p. 268.

68 *Reg*. 3, 21; 4, 11; 7.14*a*, pp. 288, 311, 483.

69 *Reg*. 4, 2; 8, 21, pp. 295–296, 553, 559.

70 See pp. 65–66 above. There seems to be no ground for Caspar's reference to the letters of Gregory I.

71 See p. 66 above.

72 *Reg*. 9, 37, p. 631.

material support for the papacy from his realms at large. Gregory adduced evidence for this in 1081 when, in his model oath for a German king, he included a promise to safeguard the rent (*census*) which Constantine and Charlemagne had assigned to St Peter.[73] Above all, it met with Gregory's approval that the empire of Constantine and the papacy of Silvester I had marked an end to the machinations of the devil against the apostolic see and had ushered in a stability for the church which had lasted until the tempests of his own pontificate.[74] The same model period had heralded the great church councils which had for ever confirmed the catholic church in the true faith.[75]

In all his letters, Gregory made no citation from or express reference to the *Constitutum Constantini*; indeed, apart from canon-law collections which will be noticed later, it attracted very little notice in sources from his pontificate.[76] Gregory may have had it in mind when formulating the eighth clause of his *Dictatus papae*, "Quod solus possit uti imperialibus insigniis".[77] While he would no doubt have invoked the *Constitutum Constantini* to warrant his claims to special concern for islands like Corsica and Sardinia,[78] he never did so explicitly.

Until and including the pontificate of Gregory VII, Latin sources whether at Rome or elsewhere were virtually unanimous in perpetuating the eulogy of Constantine the most religious emperor and champion of the rights of the church and papacy that ecclesiastical writers had sustained during ancient and

---

73 *Reg.* 9, 3, p. 576. For the *census*, cf. *Reg.* 8, 23, pp. 565–566, and see G. MEYER von KNONAU, *Jahrbücher des Deutschen Reiches unter Heinrich IV. und Heinrich V.*, 7 vols., Leipzig 1890–1909, III, p. 366 n. 34.

74 *Reg.* 2, 45, p. 183; *The Epistolae vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, ed. and trans. H.E.J. COWDREY, Oxford 1972, p. 132, no. 45.

75 *Reg.* 8, 1, p. 511.

76 For medieval use of the *Const.*, see G. LAEHR, *Die Konstantinische Schenkung in der abendländischen Literatur des Mittelalters bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1926, pp. 24–50. The reference in a German letter of perhaps 1076/9 in the Hanover Letter-collection to a "privilegium Romane ecclesie ... a Constantino imperatore et beato Silvestro compositum" is justifiably regarded by Erdmann as being to the *Constitutum Constantini* because it was confirmed "sub terribili anathemate"; cf. *Const.* lines 287–292, ed. FUHRMANN, p. 96; but it may also be coloured by the law of the fourth day in the *Actus Silvestri* (above, n. 20): *Die Hannoversche Briefsammlung (1. Hildesheimer Briefe)*, no. 34, *Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV.*, ed. C. ERDMANN & N. FICKERMANN, *MGH Die Briefe der Deutschen Kaiserzeit*, 5, Weimar 1950, p. 74.

77 *Reg.* 2, 55*a*, p. 204.

78 *Const.*, ed. FUHRMANN, lines 203–206, pp. 85–86; cf. *Reg.* 1, 29; 5, 4; 6, 12, pp. 46–47, 351–352, 413–415.

early medieval times. From the mid-1080s, while popes and papalist writers did not qualify their praise until the time of St Bernard, the presentation of him became more complex. Broadly speaking, three strands may be distinguished in their utterances. First and foremost, Constantine continued to be spoken of in traditional terms, both at Rome and elsewhere. Successive versions of the *Descriptio basilicae Lateranensis* illustrate the persistence at Rome of the praise that the original text expressed.[79] In his *Libellus contra invasores et symoniacos*, which in its final version dates from c. 1097, the Roman cardinal-priest Deusdedit placed Constantine first in his lists of *christianissimi imperatores* who preserved good customs handed down from apostolic times by seeing to the building and endowment of churches, by claiming no dominion or jurisdiction over the clergy or the church's property and by forbidding others to make such claims, and by ensuring that bishops were canonically elected.[80] At the council of Nicaea, Constantine upheld the freedom of clergy and monks from lay accusation, however blatant their crimes; he approvingly cited Rufinus's record of Constantine's speech at the council which expressed the principle that bishops could not be judged by men but were reserved for divine judgement.[81] Constantine was applauded as well for his insistence that the goods of schismatics should be forfeited.[82]

In Italy, too, the Gregorian publicist Bonizo, bishop of Sutri (1075–76) and Piacenza (1086–89), drew extensively upon the *Actus Silvestri*, rather than upon the *Constitutum Constantini*, in praising Constantine as an epoch-making figure in Christian history and as a paragon of right custom in the church. He did so in his *Liber ad amicum* (1085/6) and in his mature work, the *Liber de vita christiana*, of a few years later.[83] He reiterated the familiar view that, from the time of St Peter to that of *pius Constantinus*, the church was subject through persecuting emperors to a continuous warfare with the devil which had its roll of honour in the succession of martyr-popes. Then Constantine, the leader (*dux*) of the Roman empire, made himself

---

79 See pp. 79–81 above.

80 *Deusdedit presbyteri cardinalis Libellus contra invasores et symoniacos et reliquos scismaticos*, 1, 8, 17; 3, 10, 12 (ed. E. SACKUR, *MGH Libelli de Lite*, II, pp. 302, 316, 350–351, 353).

81 *Libellus*, 3, 6, 10, pp. 347, 351–352, citing RUFINUS, *Hist. eccles.* 1, 2, as above, n. 12.

82 *Libellus*, 2, 16, p. 334.

83 *Bonizonis episcopi Sutrini Liber ad amicum*, ed. E. DÜMMLER, *MGH Libelli de Lite*, I, pp. 568–620; BONIZO of SUTRI, *Liber de vita christiana*, ed. E. PERELS, Berlin 1930.

subject to the Christian religion.[84] Thereafter until the cruel regimes of the Lombards (*a pii Constantini usque ad Longobardorum crudelia regna*) Roman emperors habitually ruled in fear of God and obediently to the advice of their bishops and especially of the bishops of Rome; they favoured the churches, loved the clergy, and honoured the bishops, creating public peace during their lives and winning an eternal crown upon their deaths. The few wicked emperors came to a bad end.[85] As for Constantine himself, Bonizo dwelt upon his baptism by Silvester. He reviewed critically the various traditions about the date of the baptism, insisting against the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita*, which "mirabiliter aborret a vero", that it took place early.[86] Its results were, according to Bonizo, that the temples were closed and the churches opened, the image of the Saviour replaced that of Jupiter, and peace was restored to all the churches of the world. It was, indeed, quickly broken by Arius and other heretics, but Bonizo was concerned to sound the praises of Constantine (*Constantini laudes*). He especially applauded his laws as rehearsed in the *Actus Silvestri*, citing not only that of the fourth day constituting the Roman pontiff head of all bishops as the emperor was head of all judges,[87] but also that of the first day according to which Christ should be freely worshipped by the whole Roman world.[88] In pursuit of this law, Constantine was responsible for the invention of Christ's cross; he was also the greatest propagator of the name of Christ, the founder of New Rome, and an outstanding founder of Christian basilicas. He had built the Lateran basilica and baptistery; on the day after his baptism, he had founded St Peter's and had himself carried twelve baskets of earth in honour of the twelve apostles.[89] In face of the Arian heresy that so quickly threatened the peace of the church, he convened the council of Nicaea. But he properly set himself below the bishops, deeming it improper that his throne should be placed among those who would judge the twelve tribes of Israel.[90] Across the Alps in Swabia, Bernold of St Blasien likewise continued the praise of the conduct at Nicaea of the *piissimus imperator Constantinus*.[91]

---

84 *Lib. ad amic.* 1, p. 573; *Lib. de vita christ.* 3, 110; 4, 98, pp. 109, 165.
85 *Lib. ad amic.* 2, pp. 575–577.
86 *Lib. de vita christ.* 4, 33, pp. 123–124.
87 *Lib. ad amic.* 2, p. 573, *Lib. de vita christ.* 4, 33, pp. 123–124.
88 *Lib. de vita christ.* 4, 98, p. 164.
89 *Lib. ad amic.* 2, pp. 573–574, *Lib. de vita christ.* 4, 34, 98; 8, 1; pp. 124, 164, 253.
90 *Lib. ad amic.* 2, p. 574, citing *Hist. eccles. trip.* (see pp. 65–66 above).
91 *Apologeticus*, cap. 3, *Libelli Bernaldi presbyteri monachi*, ed. F. THANER, *MGH Libelli de Lite*, II, pp. 62–63.

A second strand in the more complex presentation of Constantine from c. 1085 tended to reinforce his high reputation. Hitherto, eleventh-century sources had said relatively little of Constantine the Christian warrior whose victorious warfare was heralded by his vision of the cross in the heavens and by the words, "Constantine, in hoc vince". The *Descriptio basilicae Lateranensis* kept it alive,[92] but it seems to have been through Gregory VII's posthumous supporters that it began to strike home with renewed force. After mid-1075, the elderly Bernard, *scholasticus* of Constance and Hildesheim and a perfervid Gregorian, compiled a book of canons against the Emperor Henry IV, adding a commentary in the course of which he listed kings and princes who, to repress the madness of subversive men, had very frequently taken arms as the Lord prompted them, fought as he inspired them, and so triumphed that he crowned them. First among such kings was the Emperor Constantine: converted from persecutor of Christians to champion of Christianity, he took arms against Maxentius, "tyrant of the city of Rome"; when, in hope of victory, he called upon the name of Jesus, there was displayed to him in the heavens a fiery cross, in the power of which he triumphed to the glory of the Crucified.[93]

Such language in the mid-1080s foreshadowed the Crusade preaching of ten years afterwards. It comes as no surprise that, in the first recension of his Chronicle which dates from 1105/6, Ekkehard, who had visited the Holy Land during the ill-fated Crusade of 1101 and became a monk at Tegernsee c. 1102/3 and abbot of Aura in 1108, should relate the taking of the cross by the crusading armies of 1095–99 to the vision of Constantine. He wrote that "this truly cross-bearing army displayed upon its garments the sign of the cross in token of death, believing that, according to the vision long ago revealed to Constantine the Great, the army would triumph in this sign over the enemies of the cross of Christ".[94] This confidence in the cross of victory which Constantine saw in the sky appears to have been deliberately fostered in 1095–96 during the progress through Southern and Central France by Pope Urban II (1088–99). He set out from Rome, where, especially in the

---

92 See pp. 80–81 above.

93 *Liber canonum contra Heinricum Quartum*, cap. 9, ed. F. THANER, *MGH Libelli de Lite*, I, p. 482.

94 "Crucis signaculum in vestibus idem vere crucifer exercitus ob mortificationis preferebat commonitorium, credens in hoc iuxta visionem Magno quondam Constantino revelatam ab inimicis crucis Christi se triumphaturum": *Ekkehardi Chronica, a.*1099, in *Frutolfi et Ekkehardi Chronica necnon Anonymi Chronica imperatorum*, ed. F.-J. SCHMALE & I. SCHMALE-OTT, Darmstadt 1972, p. 138; for Ekkehard's career and for the date of the first recension, see pp. 19–31, 33–34.

papal treasuries of the Lateran, relics of the holy cross seen as part of the legacy of Constantine formed part of everyday human consciousness; he came to parts of France where the equestrian statue of a warrior identified with Constantine was familiar.[95] After his sermon in November 1095 at the council of Clermont, Urban's journey was marked by dedications of churches and altars to the holy cross.[96] At la Trinité, Vendôme, he dedicated an altar "in honore victoriosissimae crucis".[97] At Marmoutier, near Tours, he dedicated the abbey church to the Holy Cross, St Mary, the apostles Peter and Paul, and St Martin; the principal relic which he placed in the main altar was a fragment of the true cross (*particula ... victoriosissimae crucis*). While Urban was at Tours, many knights sowed upon their garments the *vexillum* of the holy cross.[98] The pope kept Easter at Saintes; while he was there, the sign of the cross appeared in the sky.[99] Such evidence suggests that the cross of Christ which the knights of the West assumed was the cross of victory which Constantine had seen in his vision and which would find a prominent place in works of art such as the Stavelot Triptych.[100] The First Crusade appears to have made its contribution to Constantine's high reputation.

A third strand in the presentation of Constantine after the mid-1080s was ambivalent and ultimately damaging so far as his medieval reputation was concerned. It arises from how his reign was interpreted in canon law, especially in view of a revived concern with the *Constitutum Constantini*. For reasons which are far from clear, it received very little attention during most of the pontificate of Gregory VII. This can scarcely be because it seemed to concede too much to the decree of an emperor in establishing the prerogatives of the apostolic see,[101] for the same objection would apply to the *Actus Silvestri*, especially to its record of Constantine's "ten laws",

---

95 See pp. 73, 80–81 above.

96 For Urban's journey, see A. BECKER, *Papst Urban II. (1088–1099), MGH Schriften*, 19/1–, Stuttgart 1964–, II, pp. 435–457; also T. RUINART, "Beati Urbani papae II vita," *Ouvrages posthumes de D. Jean Mabillon et de D. Thierri Ruinart*, ed. V. THUILLIER, 3 vols., Paris 1724, III, pp. 1–410, whence PL 151, 9–266.

97 26 Feb. 1096: BECKER, *Papst Urban II.*, II, pp. 445–446; RUINART, "Beati Urbani," pp. 245, 386.

98 3–c. 25 Mar. 1096: BECKER, *Papst Urban II.*, II, pp. 446–447; RUINART, "Beati Urbani," pp. 246–248, 387–390; *Gesta Ambaziensium dominorum*, in *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou et des seigneurs d'Amboise*, ed. L. HALPHEN & R. POUPARDIN, Paris 1913, pp. 100–101.

99 Charter of Saint-Maixent in *Analecta juris pontificii*, X^{e} sér., Rome 1869, col. 551, no. 93.

100 See p. 73 above.

101 For example, lines 156–164, ed. FUHRMANN, pp. 80–81, 82–83.

which was often drawn upon by Gregorian publicists. The popularity of the *Actus Silvestri* suggests that it may have eclipsed the *Constitutum Constantini* because it made more effectively the points that Gregorians were concerned to make about the respective roles of popes and emperors and about the superiority of the clergy to lay jurisdiction. However this may be, earlier eleventh-century canon-law collections ignored the *Constitutum Constantini* and said little about Constantine. When substantiating the rubric that Constantine gave leave to build churches, which was his only reference to this emperor, the German bishop Burchard of Worms, writing c. 1007–14, cited only a chapter of the Pseudo-Isidorian second letter of Pope Miltiades.[102] Such collections from Gregory VII's middle years as Cardinal Atto's *Capitulare* and the *Diversorum patrum sententie* made no mention of Constantine; they were rigidly ecclesiastical in the material that they cited.[103]

A sign that the legal climate in papal circles had changed came in 1091 when, unlike Gregory VII, Urban II expressly based his claim to dispose of Corsica as of other islands upon the right that Constantine conferred upon Peter and his successors.[104] The change was already apparent when leading canonists of Gregory's party in the early 1080s cited the second half, or *donatio*, of the *Constitutum Constantini* and, by the rubrics which introduced it, focused attention sharply upon Constantine's endowment of the church, the clergy, and the pope with property and royal dignity. Both Bishop Anselm II of Lucca (1083/6) and Cardinal Deusdedit (before 1087) invoked virtually identical authorities: Constantine's law of the fourth day from the *Actus Silvestri* and then copious portions of the *donatio* of the *Constitutum*

---

102 *Decretum*, 3, 5 (PL 140, 675A).

103 *Attonis cardinali presbyteri Capitulare*, in A. MAI. *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio*, 10 vols. Rome, 1825–38, VI/2, pp. 60–100; *Diuersorum patrum sententie, siue Collectio in LXXIV titulos digesta*, ed. J.T. GILCHRIST, Vatican City 1973. For a full discussion of the *Constitutum Constantini* in Western canon law from Pseudo-Isidore to Gratian, see J. PETERSMANN, "Die kanonistische Überlieferung des Constitutum Constantini bis zum Dekret Gratians. Untersuchung und Edition," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 30, 1974, pp. 356–449. Petersmann provides an edition of the canonist form of the *Constitutum Constantini* at pp. 399–446; for its citation or non-citation in mid-cleventh-century texts, see pp. 360–362, 366–368.

104 "Cum omnes insulae secundum statuta legalia iuris publici habeantur, constat etiam eas religiosi imperatoris Constantini liberalitate ac privilegio in beati Petri vicariorumque eius ius proprium esse collatas": *Ep.* 51 (PL 151, 330–331). See also *Ep.* 50 (PL 151, 329-30), in which Urban advanced a similar claim with respect to the Lipari Islands.

Constantini.[105] There is no doubt that their source was the revised version of the *Constitutum Constantini* which appeared in the Rome of Leo IX and Humbert; furthermore, the texts were very similar to, but not quite identical with, those in Leo's *Libellus*.[106] It is possible, but not demonstrable, that the material common to the two canonists had circulated as a Gregorian manifesto against Henry IV of Germany during his expeditions to Italy and Rome of the early 1080s. Anselm's rubric asserted that "the Emperor Constantine gave to the pope the crown and every royal dignity in the city of Rome and Italy and in Western regions"; Deusdedit announced that his fourth book, which began with his citation of the *Constitutum Constantini*, concerned "the liberty of the church and the goods of the church and the clergy".[107] In his *Decretum* (c. 1093/4) and *Panormia* (c. 1094/5), Bishop Ivo of Chartres likewise made his own citations from the *Constitutum Constantini* in chapters about, respectively, the imperial insignia that Constantine gave to the church and the privileges of the Roman church that Constantine granted to Pope Silvester.[108] All these citations disregarded the first half of his privilege in which Constantine exalted the dignity of the Roman church and its pontiffs, in order to concentrate upon parts of the second half, which in however imprecise terms provided title-deeds of the specific rights and endowments of the apostolic see within and outside Rome. Moreover, the citations were no longer set, as in Leo's *Libellus*, in an

---

105 *Anselmi episcopi Lucensis Collectio canonum*, 4, 33, ed. F. THANER, Innsbruck 1906, I, pp. 206–210; *Die Kanonessammlung des Kardinals Deusdedit*, I: *Die Kanonessammlung selbst*, 4.1, ed. V. WULF von GLANVELL, Paderborn 1905, pp. 397–401. A citation of *Actus Silvestri*, as LINDER, "Constantine's 'Ten Laws'," p. 494, IV, is followed by *Const.* lines 157–77, 196–197, 202–208, 216–295, 304–305, ed. FUHRMANN, pp. 80–83, 85–86, 87–98, with small omissions and variations.

106 See p. 77 above, and PETERSMANN, "Die kanonistiche Überlieferung," pp. 368–374.

107 "Quod Constantinus imperator papae concessit coronam et omnem regiam dignitatem in urbe Romana et Italia et in partibus occidentalibus"; "De libertate ecclesię et rerum eius et cleri".

108 "Exemplum constituti Constantini imperatoris de insignibus imperialibus ecclesiae concessis": *Decretum*, 5, 49 (PL 161, 341–343); "De privilegiis Constantini imperatoris, concessis Sylvestro papae ab eodem": *Panormia*, 4, 1 (PL 161, 1181–1182). In both cases, Ivo cited *Const.* lines 214–234, 253–276, ed. FUHRMANN, pp. 87–89, 92–95.

overall picture of the *regale sacerdotium* of the Roman pontiff. Some two and a half centuries after its probable date of drafting, the *Constitutum Constantini* was becoming the "Donation of Constantine". *Donatio Constantini* gradually found its way into the titles that appear in manuscripts.[109]

The post-Gregorian canonists also kept alive in their collections the traditions about Constantine the *vir religiosissimus* who had recognised the Christian religion and instituted the building and endowing of churches which had been established by Pseudo-Isidore in the second letter ascribed to Pope Miltiades.[110] In so doing, they perpetuated the reputation of the good Emperor Constantine while also accentuating the tendency to highlight his material enrichment of the church. Thus, Ivo of Chartres more than once applauded him as the emperor who acknowledged the pope's principate over the whole world and who, having himself embraced Christianity, allowed churches everywhere to be built.[111] In his *Decretum* of c. 1140 which ushered in the *ius novum* of the later middle ages, Gratian of Bologna in a chapter with the disarming heading "Quare in primitiva ecclesia praedia vendebantur" so excerpted Melchiades as to show how, thanks to *vir religiosissimus Constantinus*, the church had everywhere become propertied in head and members. Gratian himself studiously avoided reference to the *Constitutum Constantini*. It was left to his first glossator, Paucapalea, to introduce into his treatment of *sacerdotium* and *regnum* a text of the *donatio* half of the *Constitutum Constantini* which closely followed that in Anselm of Lucca and Deusdedit.[112] Gratian, too, was made to exhibit Constantine as the promoter of a propertied church.

---

109 London, British Library, MS Royal 1 A XVI; see FUHRMANN, pp. 21, 55.

110 See p. 73 above.

111 "Quod Constantinus primus imperatorum fidem Christianorum patenter adeptus, fabricandi ecclesias omnibus potestatem dedit": *Decretum*, 3, 7, cf. *Panormia*, 2, 3 (PL 161, 201, 1083).

112 *Decretum* C. 12, qn 1, c.15, *Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. E. FRIEDBERG, 2 vols., Leipzig 1879–81, I, p. 682. The *paleae* P. 1, D.96, cc. 13–14, ed. FRIEDBERG, 1, pp. 342–345, which begin with a reference to Constantine's law of the fourth day, are best studied in PETERSMANN, "Die kanonistische Überlieferung," pp. 406–13, 416–417, 428–445; see also D. MAFFEI, *La Donazione di Costantino nei giuristi medievali,* Milan 1964, pp. 26–29.

But by Gratian's time, disenchantment with the failure to accomplish the moral reform that the eleventh-century church leaders initiated made Western Christians look ever more intently to the model of the primitive church "when all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need" (Acts 2: 44–5).[113] The incompatibility between the two models of the church which the Pseudo-Isidorian account of Constantine proposed — those of the life of the disciples *in principio nascentis ecclesiae* when goods were sold and distributed, and of the triumphant and endowed church under the Christian emperors who began with Constantine — became increasingly apparent.[114] It could no longer be disregarded, as it was in Gratian's chapter. Constantine continued to enjoy a reputation as *pius imperator*, but from Bernard of Clairvaux onwards there was always ambivalence about him. The "Donation of Constantine" as now understood pointed the way to Dante's idea of a fatal dower:

> *Ah* Constantine, *of how much ill was cause*
> *Not thy Conversion, but those rich demaines*
> *That the first wealthy* Pope *received of thee.*[115]

In its repeated critiques of the Pseudo-Isidorian Decrees, made without the benefit of reference to the parent text the *Actus Silvestri*, the *Defensor pacis* went further and questioned whether the words of *devotus Constantinus* really meant that other bishops were subject in jurisdiction to the Roman bishop.[116]

As the Stavelot Diptych illustrates, the reputation of Constantine as the most religious emperor survived the developments that have been the subject of the latter part of this paper. But, from the late eleventh century onwards, there were more sides than one to the picture that was presented. The

---

113 See esp. G. MICCOLI, "Ecclesiae primitivae forma," in *Chiesa gregoriana: Ricerche sulla Riforma del secolo XI*, Florence 1966, pp. 225–299.

114 For twelfth century developments, see LAEHR, *Die Konstantinische Schenkung*, pp. 44–73, and MAFFEI, *La Donazione di Costantino*, pp. 23–101.

115 *Inferno*, 19, 115–117 (Milton's translation).

116 1, 19, 8; 2, 11, 8; 16, 9; 18, 5–7; 20, 13; 21, 2; 22, 10; 22, 19–20; 25, 4–5; 27, 3; 28, 19; *The Defensor Pacis of Marsilius of Padua*, ed. C.W. PREVITÉ-ORTON, Cambridge 1928, pp. 104–105, 212, 279–280, 307–309, 325–326, 328, 349–350, 356–357, 383–384, 426–427, 451–452.

canonists' emphasis upon material endowment gave rise to doubts and contrasts which were already preparing the way for the English Independent John Milton summarily to conclude that "Constantine marred all in the church".[117]

---

117 As above, n. 1.

I am grateful to the British Academy for a generous contribution towards the cost of attending the Conference at which this paper was given. My thanks are also due to Katherine Scargill for her expertise in word-processing the paper.

MANUSCRIPTS AND SOURCES: 1

TRADITIONS OF CONSTANTINOPOLITAN PREACHING: TOWARDS A NEW ASSESSMENT OF WHERE CHRYSOSTOM PREACHED WHAT

Pauline Allen & Wendy Mayer / Australian Catholic University

In the course of an examination of early Christian homilies as a source for social history, we have been confronted by the necessity of determining as far as possible where John Chrysostom preached what.[1] If we are to use Chrysostom as a source, we have to try to establish which of his homilies can be responsibly assigned to his patriarchate at Constantinople (397–404), in order to arrive at a sure touchstone of homiletic evidence for the social history of that city. Similarly, any investigation into the social history of Antioch will have to address the same issues with regard to the homilies delivered by John during his presbyterate (386–397). The wide variety of liturgical practices in the early centuries of the church, a variety clearly attested to in a number of liturgical documents which have come down to us,[2] must also have been reflected in the homilies of different locations. In other words, we need to address such questions as the following: do some of Chrysostom's homilies contain material that is peculiar to the homiletic genre in Constantinople, or passages that would have been out of place in a homily delivered in Antioch?

---

1 See P. ALLEN, "Homilies as a Source for Social History," *StP* 24, 1993, pp. 1–5; P. ALLEN & W. MAYER, "Computer and Homily: Accessing the Everyday Life of Early Christians," *VigChr* 47, 1993, pp. 260–280. The research for this project was financed by the Australian Research Council.

2 See, for example, EGERIA, *Itin.*, 25, 11; *Le codex arménien de Jérusalem 121*, II, PO 36, pp. 220–221; *Le grand lectionnaire de l'église de Jérusalem*, II, CSCO 204–205, nn. 1219–1220; and G. GARITTE, "Un index géorgien des lectures évangéliques selon le ancien rite de Jérusalem," *Muséon* 85, 1972, p. 352. These document significant variations in the commemoration of Lazarus within the Jerusalem rite over a number of centuries. Historical sources also attest to this variety. See, for instance, M. HIGGINS, "Note on the Purification (and Date of Nativity) in Constantinople in 602," *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* II, 1952, pp. 81–83, on the evidence for the alteration in date of Christmas at Constantinople over the course of the sixth century.

At the outset we found a reasonable degree of consensus among scholars regarding where Chrysostom preached what.[3] This was perhaps especially the case with the exegetical series of homilies on the New Testament, a category on which we shall concentrate here. Yet, as we proceeded with our reading of Chrysostom's text, this consensus began to appear more and more ill-founded. With very few exceptions,[4] scholars have assumed that where internal evidence in one or two homilies in an exegetical series points indubitably to an Antiochene or Constantinopolitan provenance, then all the other homilies in the series as it comes down to us were delivered in the same place as well. When perspicacious researchers have discovered internal evidence in one homily of a series which goes against the tide of received scholarly opinion *qua* provenance and have bravely dissented, they have still argued in favour of reversing the provenance of the *whole* series, instead of treating its component parts on a case by case basis. Thus Stilting and Baur wished to relegate the whole series on Philippians (CPG 4432) to Antioch,[5] Seeck the series on Acts (CPG 4426) to Antioch,[6] Nägele the 28 homilies on 1 and 2 Timothy (CPG 4436–4437) to Constantinople,[7] Costanza the 24 homilies *In ep. ad Ephesios* (CPG 4431) to Constantinople,[8] and Opelt the 34 homilies *In ep. ad Hebraeos* (CPG 4440) to Antioch.[9] While there are no doubt various reasons behind this excessive reverence for a particular series as

---

3 On the reasonable, but by no means complete agreement among scholars concerning where Chrysostom preached what see the standard works on the question: H. LIETZMANN, art. "Johannes Chrysostomos," *RE* 9, 1916, cols. 1811–1828 (= *Kleine Schriften* I, *TU* 67, Berlin 1958, pp. 326–347); M. VON BONSDORFF, *Zur Predigttätigkeit des Johannes Chrysostomus. biographisch-chronologische Studien über seine Homilienserien zu neutestamentlichen Büchern*, diss. Helsingfors 1922; C. BAUR, *Johannes Chrysostomus und seine Zeit*, 2 vols, Munich 1929–30 (= *John Chrysostom and His Time*, 2 vols, Westminster 1959–60).

4 For these, see von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, pp. 15–16; L.S. Le Nain de TILLEMONT, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles*, XI, Paris 1706, p. 371.

5 J. STILTING, *Acta Sanctorum Septembris*, IV, Antwerp 1753, pp. 495–496; BAUR, *Chrysostom and His Time*, I, pp. 299–300.

6 O. SEECK, "Studien zu Synesios," *Philologus* 52, 1894, p. 460 n. 44.

7 A. NÄGELE, "Des Johannes Chrysostomus Homilien zu den Timotheusbriefen des hl. Apostels Paulus und die Zeit ihrer Abfassung," *ThQ* 116, 1935, pp. 117–142.

8 M. COSTANZA, "Waar predikte Sint Chrysostomus zijn vier en twintig homilieën als commentaar op Sint Paulus' brief aan de Ephesiërs?," *Studia Catholica* 27, 1952, pp. 145–154.

9 I. OPELT, "Das Ende von Olympia. Zur Entstehungszeit der Predigten zum Hebräerbrief des Johannes Chrysostomos," *ZKirch* 81, 1970, pp. 64–69.

a package, after the first quarter of the twentieth century a significant motivation was the work of Max von Bonsdorff, who arrived at a schematisation of Chrysostom's homiletic series on the New Testament books.[10] While von Bonsdorff's conclusions regarding provenance and chronology of the series are convenient, they are, in our opinion, altogether too neat.

The assumption of scholars that the New Testament exegetical series are homogeneous is all the more surprising in view of the composition of other Chrysostomic series. At least two other "series" contain homilies which were delivered in different localities: the *De proditione Iudae* (CPG 4336)[11] and the *XI/revera XV homiliae* (CPG 4441).[12] The second of these collections is particularly instructive, since, according to the manuscripts, the preacher's venue changes from the church of St. Thomas to a martyrium, to St. Anastasia, to St. Irene, the Church of the Holy Apostles, back to St. Anastasia, St. Paul, the Great Church, the Church of the Apostle, back to the Great Church and the Church of St. Paul. Furthermore, there are series lacking in chronological homogeneity such as the *De paenitentia* (CPG 4333),[13] *De laudibus s. Pauli* (CPG 4344),[14] *Expositiones in psalmos* (CPG 4413)[15] and *In illud: Vidi dominum* (CPG 4417).[16] As the detailed study on the *De statuis* (CPG 4330) published recently by Frans van de Paverd shows,[17] it can also happen that, from an early date, a homiletic series has been transmitted in the manuscripts out of sequential order. It is even the case that series are transmitted with a piece missing, for example *In*

---

10 See n. 3 above.

11 See LIETZMANN, "Johannes," cols. 1816–1817.

12 See BAUR, *Chrysostom and His Time*, II, pp. 34–35, 51, 53, 55 n. 22, 77, 86–87; P. BATIFFOL, "De quelques homélies de s. Jean Chrysostome et de la version gothique des écritures," *RevBibl* VIII, 1899, pp. 566–572; J.F. BALDOVIN, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, *OCA* 228, Rome 1987, pp. 182–183.

13 See J. QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 453.

14 See A. PIÉDAGNEL, *Jean Chrysostome. Panégyriques de S. Paul*, *SC* 300, Paris 1982, pp. 19–20.

15 See L. MEYER, *Saint Jean Chrysostome. Maître de perfection chrétienne*, Paris 1933, p. xxxiii.

16 See J. DUMORTIER, *Jean Chrysostome. Homélies sur Ozias (In illud, Vidi Dominum)*, *SC* 277, Paris 1981, pp. 10–13. See further ibid., pp. 13–17, on no. 4 in this series, which Dumortier believes to be of dubious authenticity.

17 F. van de PAVERD, *St. John Chrysostom, The Homilies on the Statues. An Introduction*, *OCA* 239, Roma 1991.

principium Actorum (CPG 4371)[18] and *De Anna* (CPG 4411).[19] Another oddity that should caution anyone who is inclined to assume *a priori* the homogeneity of a series is the fact that we have at least two collections, *Contra Anomoeos* (CPG 4318–4325)[20] and *Sermones in Genesim 1–9* (CPG 4410),[21] which contain extraneous homilies. Perhaps the most arresting datum of all, however, is that several Chrysostomic "series", *De paenitentia*,[22] *De Macabeis* (CPG 4354)[23] and *De fato et providentia* (CPG 4367),[24] have come down to us containing homilies which do not belong to Chrysostom at all. Because all such series as they come down to us are probably descended from the prototypes of homiletical collections which A. Ehrhard assigned to the late eighth and early ninth centuries,[25] an investigation of the manuscript tradition is not going to be fruitful.[26] Rather, in determining the provenance of the homilies we are thrown back almost exclusively on the internal evidence of the individual series itself.

Our intention in what follows is to examine the validity of some types of internal evidence in Chrysostom's homilies on New Testament books which have been taken as indicating a Constantinopolitan provenance, or used as a proof that the preacher was following a tradition of Constantinopolitan preaching. Subsequently we wish to call into question the assumption that

---

18 On this see von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 13 n. 2.

19 See STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, IV, pp. 478–479.

20 On this, see A.M. MALINGREY, "Prolégomènes à une édition des homélies de Jean Chrysostome, *Contra Anomoeos*," *StP* 22, 1989, pp. 154–158.

21 On the relationship between sermo 9 of this "series" and the 4 homilies *De mutatione nominum* (CPG 4372), see A. WENGER, "La tradition des œuvres de saint Jean Chrysostome," *REB* 14, 1956, pp. 44–45.

22 See the summary provided by GEERARD, CPG II, p. 500. C. MARTIN, "Une homélie De Poenitentia de Sévérien de Gabala," *RHE* 26, 1930, pp. 331–343, restores homily 7 in this series to Severian of Gabala.

23 See J. de ALDAMA, *Repertorium Pseudochrysostomicum, Documents, Études et Répertoires publiés par l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes* X, Paris 1965, n. 209.

24 See de ALDAMA, *Repertorium*, nn. 268, 310, 357, 428, 473, 523.

25 A. EHRHARD, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts*, I, *TU* 50, Leipzig 1937, pp. 25–35.

26 Further, in the absence of texts which have been established according to modern scientific principles, we need to be aware that many conclusions of a textual nature regarding these homilies (in particular those on the Pauline epistles) can only be tentative. On the problems posed by the series on the Pauline epistles see B. GOODALL, *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom on the Letters of St. Paul to Titus and Philemon. Prolegomena to an Edition*, Berkeley, Los Angeles & London 1979, pp. 1–5.

series are homogeneous by examining the twelve homilies *In epistulam ad Colossenses* (CPG 4433) and the fifteen homilies *In epistulam ad Philippenses*. Finally we give some indications of a responsible methodology which will help towards a fresh assessment of where Chrysostom preached what.

Types of Internal Evidence

I. Episcopal tone.

One type of internal evidence much vaunted by scholars in resolving the provenance question is episcopal "tone", the argument being that if this "tone" is present then the homily under consideration must belong to John's Constantinopolitan period. Thus in the course of substantiating the scholarly verdict that the 55 homilies on Acts are to be assigned to Constantinople, von Bonsdorff adduces two passages from homily 8 of the series.[27] The first reads as follows:

> Either depose me from this office, or else don't involve me in danger if I stay. I can't bear to ascend this chair if I don't achieve great things. If this isn't possible, it is better to stand down below. Nothing is more pitiful than someone in office who does not help those who are subordinate to him.[28]

Von Bonsdorff's implicit argument hinges on the word θρόνος, as shown by the contents of the second passage: "As long as I sit on this chair, I shall not abandon its rights. If someone deposes me, then I am not guilty."[29]

However, as Joseph Bingham had already argued, there is evidence that a presbyter, too, was entitled to sit on a θρόνος; in fact we have to think of several θρόνοι in a church, the high throne being reserved for the bishop.[30] In the homily *De s. hieromartyre Babyla* (CPG 4326), Chrysostom himself refers to the recent bishop of Antioch, Meletius, and τῶν προσεδρευόντων αὐτῷ, namely his presbyters.[31] Thus reference to a θρόνος cannot of itself be considered a reliable indicator of episcopal status.

---

27 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 87.

28 PG 60, 74 21–26.

29 PG 60, 76 3–5.

30 J. BINGHAM, *Origines Ecclesiasticae; or the Antiquities of the Christian Church*, II, xix, 5. There are several editions of this work. The edition used here appeared in 8 vols, revised by R. BINGHAM, London 1834.

31 PG 50, 533 16–19. For a further reference by Chrysostom to presbyters as seated, see *In Matth. hom. 32/33*, PG 57, 384 38–40.

Again, arguing against Baur's thesis that the homilies *In ep. ad Philippenses* belong to Antioch,[32] Quasten, echoing Lietzmann,[33] finds "several references to his [sc. Chrysostom's] responsibilities as a bishop, especially in *In Phil. hom.* 9, 5, which prove their later origin at Constantinople".[34] Presumably we are referred here to PG 62, 253 55–56: "I am a father; fathers indulge children greatly and over and above what is necessary." How unreliable such evidence is can be seen from a passage in *In Matth. hom. 32/33*, 7 (CPG 4424), generally assigned to Antioch:[35] "I have a father's feelings. If I should ever rebuke you, I do this out of concern."[36]

A further instance of Chrysostom's episcopal authority as perceived by scholars is the powerful indictment, denunciation or threatening of members of his congregation. Von Bonsdorff, for instance, argues that the lambasting of women's luxurious lifestyle in homily 7 on Colossians, and the attack in homily 8 of the same series on those who have recourse to all kinds of pagan oaths to cure sick children, witness to the episcopal authority of the preacher.[37] Similarly he adduces *In I Thess. hom. 10* (CPG 4434), where the homilist threatens to ban individuals in his congregation from church or from communal prayer, as proof of the "Bischofswürde des Redners".[38] Now an unprejudiced reading of the passage cited by von Bonsdorff reveals on the contrary that Chrysostom is making clear to his congregation that the power to ban an individual from church or from communal prayer is common to the whole priesthood (i.e., presbyter and bishop alike). Thus evidence of the preacher's authority of the type just mentioned should likewise be treated with a certain amount of caution.

Mention by Chrysostom that he holds a principal office (προστασία) and that he is personally accountable for the members of his congregation is also considered by scholars to be a sure indicator of episcopal status. Quasten, for instance, follows a long-standing tradition[39] when he adduces the words: "I shall have to answer for this office (προστασία) in which I preside over you", as proof that *In I Thess. hom. 8* (and the series) belongs to John's

---

32 See n. 5 above.
33 LIETZMANN, "Johannes," col. 1818.
34 QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 447.
35 For the status quaestionis see von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, pp. 14–16. For von Bonsdorff's personal comments on the passage, see ibid., p. 78.
36 PG 57, 385 25–26.
37 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, pp. 82–83.
38 *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 100. The passage adduced is PG 62, 455 6–456 7.
39 See STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, IV, p. 551; LIETZMANN, "Johannes," col. 1818; von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 100.

Constantinopolitan period.[40] Chrysostom makes it clear elsewhere, however, that in his opinion προστασία is attached not to the episcopacy *per se*, but to both ranks of the priesthood endowed with the office of teaching (i.e., presbyter, as well as bishop).[41] Thus the terms προΐστημι, προστασία and so on which occur in homily 8 on I Thessalonians and in other homilies delivered by Chrysostom[42] cannot, in the absence of supporting evidence, reliably be used as an indication of his episcopal status.

II. Identification with well-known historical figures or events.

Another type of internal evidence which has been used to fix homilies geographically and/or chronologically involves passages which are taken as referring to well-known events or personalities belonging to the period of Chrysostom's preaching activity. While such indentifications are tempting, they cannot be considered part of a reliable methodology for determining the provenance or date of a homily. One telling example will suffice in illustration of this argument. Chrysostom's homily, *De capto Eutropio* (CPG 4528), believed by some scholars to be spurious in part,[43] has been taken for centuries as indeed referring unmistakably to the demise of the powerful consul Eutropius in the summer of 399.[44] However, recently Alan Cameron has shown by careful examination of the internal evidence that passages in the homily cannot be taken definitively as referring to Eutropius, and that in fact there is "much else that does not fit the circumstances of Eutropius' deposition at all".[45] The bad guess which identified the anonymous subject of the homily with Eutropius was conceivably made even as early as the generation after Chrysostom's death; in any case the homily has borne its erroneous title for many centuries. After demonstrating beyond

---

40 QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 449; see PG 62, 446 17–20.

41 See for instance *De decem millium talentorum debitore*, PG 51, 23 11–23; and *In I Tim. hom. 11*, PG 62, 553 7–16.

42 For example, *In illud: Vidi dominum hom. 1*, PG 56, 103 53–104 1; *In Acta apost. hom. 3*, PG 60, 38 51–39 7; *In Acta apost. hom. 9*, PG 60, 84 25–31; *In II Thess. hom. 4*, PG 62, 490 29–492 37.

43 See de ALDAMA, *Repertorium*, n. 170.

44 E.g. STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, IV, pp. 532–533; von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 76; QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 458; and most recently, J.H.W.G. LIEBESCHUETZ, *Barbarians and Bishops. Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom*, Oxford 1990, pp. 189, 218.

45 A. CAMERON, "A Misidentified Homily of Chrysostom," *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* 32, 1988, pp. 34–48, in particular p. 36.

doubt that the infamous consul cannot be the subject of CPG 4528, Cameron proceeds to make an identification with the much lesser known dignitary Count John, who had been exiled with Saturninus and Aurelian in 400, and was named at the Synod of the Oak in the proceedings against Chrysostom. While we do not necessarily agree with this conclusion, Cameron has shown the dangers of assuming an identification with a well-known historical figure without sufficiently scrutinising the internal evidence of a homily, and has furnished us with another example of a homily with an erroneous title.

III. Other types of evidence.

There are many more examples of dubious interpretation of internal evidence in Chrysostom's homilies. His vehement attacks on luxurious life-styles, for instance, have led scholars to assume that homilies containing such passages had to be delivered in Constantinople.[46] Descriptions of imperial trappings in the homilies have confidently been taken as an indicator of Constantinopolitan provenance without a thorough investigation of all such passages to determine which are topoi and which are not. Thus in the case of homily 6 on Philippians, von Bonsdorff places a degree of reliance on just such a reference to the relative status of ὕπαρχος and βασιλεύς.[47] In the course of addressing the congregation on the subject of humility, Chrysostom adduces the following:

> For example, if the emperor is subjected to the ὕπαρχος, he is humble, because he has descended from a lofty position; if, on the other hand, the ὕπαρχος does this, he is not demonstrating humility. How could he? He hasn't lowered himself from a lofty position.[48]

While acknowledging that the connection between the two people in the exemplum is "ganz allgemein", von Bonsdorff identifies the ὕπαρχος with the *Præfectus prætorio per Orientem*, consequently finding a possible hint of Constantinopolitan provenance. Yet the word ὕπαρχος, capable of several

---

46 For this, in the case of the series on Colossians, see STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, IV, pp. 539–540; also R. KACZYNSKI, *Das Wort Gottes in Liturgie und Alltag der Gemeinden des Johannes Chrysostomus*, *Freiburger Theologische Studien* 94, Freiburg-Basel-Wien 1974, p. 202 with nn. 650–651.

47 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 80.

48 PG 62, 221 17–21.

meanings,[49] is surely best rendered here by the more general term "subordinate". In any case the terms of the exemplum are too general for the reference to be narrowed down to a specific prefectorial office, unless perhaps, like von Bonsdorff, one is convinced *a priori* of a Constantinopolitan provenance.

Similarly, the tableau in homily 12 on Philippians with the emperor crowning the most successful athletes and charioteers not down in the stadium but up at the bema, is seen by von Bonsdorff as a possible hint of Constantinopolitan provenance. But here von Bonsdorff himself concedes that similar tableaux involving the emperor crowning successful contenders in the games can also be found in homilies delivered by Chrysostom in Antioch[50] — namely *In Genesim hom. 5* [51] and *In 2 Cor. hom. 3*.[52]

An *a priori* conviction of Constantinopolitan provenance has even led scholars to place importance upon otherwise insignificant data. Thus, in homily 6 on Philippians, where Chrysostom attacks Arius, Paul of Samosata, Marcellus of Ancyra, Sabellius, Marcion, Valentinus, Manes, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Photinus and Sophronius,[53] von Bonsdorff attaches importance to the fact that Apollinaris appears in the list of heresiarchs because, he claims, this name is not found in the series deriving from Antioch.[54] Recourse to a computer search of the Chrysostomic corpus via the *Thesaurus Linguæ Græcæ*,[55] however, now puts this argument to rest: there is no reference to Apollinaris to be found in any other genuine work of Chrysostom.

There are yet other types of evidence which have been adduced by scholars to establish the Constantinopolitan provenance of a homily or series of homilies. Since these in all or part rest upon the predication of the homogeneity of Chrysostom's homiletic series, we have confined ourselves to only a few examples in order to focus on this crucial question.

---

49 These range from "subordinate", "commander", "lieutenant", to the more specific "proconsul" or "prefect". *LSJ*[9] s.v. ὕπαρχος.

50 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 80.

51 PG 53, 54 11–19.

52 PG 61, 413 10–15. For a further reference to the presence of the *basileus* at the races in a homily of clear Antiochene provenance, see *In illud: Vidi dominum hom. 3*, PG 56, 113 51–114 1.

53 PG 62, 217 7ai-219 51.

54 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 80.

55 On the value of this tool for Chrysostom studies, see R. TAFT, "The authenticity of the Chrysostom anaphora revisited. Determining the authorship of liturgical texts by computer," *OrChrP* 56, 1990, pp. 25–27.

The Homogeneity of Series

I. The 12 Homilies on Colossians.

On the face of it, the provenance of Chrysostom's series of 12 homilies *In ep. ad Colossenses* is a closed one. Tillemont,[56] Montfaucon[57] and Stilting[58] argued for the Constantinopolitan provenance of the series; they were followed by others, notably Lietzmann,[59] von Bonsdorff,[60] Meyer,[61] Baur[62] and Quasten.[63] The series is assigned by these scholars to 398, 398/9 or 399. There are three faintly dissenting voices in favour of the Antiochene provenance of particular homilies: Taft for homily 3,[64] Wilken for homily 8,[65] and Berthold for homily 10.[66] One of the lynch-pins in scholarly argument for assigning the series to Constantinople and dating it to c. 399 is homily 7, where one passage is taken as referring to the fall and exile of the powerful eunuch-consul, Eutropius, in 399,[67] and another is interpreted as being Chrysostom's reminiscences, as patriarch, of the Antiochene riots of 387.[68] In addition, von Bonsdorff detects a tone of episcopal authority in the threats which the homilist makes to women who live senselessly in exaggerated luxury.[69]

The first passage, part of a demonstration of the instability and dangers of ἀρχή, reads as follows:

> To whom are they not subject — to their lovers, to the eunuchs, to those who do everything for the sake of money, to the anger of the people, to the rage of those who are more powerful? The one who yesterday was lofty in the tribune,

---

56 TILLEMONT, *Mémoires*, XI, p. 376f.

57 B. de MONTFAUCON, *S.P.N. Ioannis Chrysostomi opera omnia quae exstant uel eius nomine circumferentur*, XI, Paris 1718–1738, p. 321f.

58 STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, IV, pp. 539–540.

59 LIETZMANN, "Johannes," col. 1818.

60 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, pp. 82-84.

61 MEYER, *S. Jean Chrysostome*, xxxv–xxxvi.

62 BAUR, *Chrysostom and His Time*, II, p. 93.

63 QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 448.

64 TAFT, "Autheniticity of the Chrysostom Anaphora," p. 41 and n. 121.

65 R.L. WILKEN, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late Fourth Century*, Berkeley, Los Angeles & London 1983, p. 84.

66 H. BERTHOLD, "Die frühe christliche Literatur als Quelle für die Sozialgeschichte," in J. IRMSCHER and K. TREU (edd.), *Das Korpus der Griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller, TU* 120, Berlin 1977, p. 60.

67 On this see von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 85.

68 Ibid., pp. 83–84.

69 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 83.

> who had heralds crying with a clear voice, and many running in front of him, clearing the way in the market-place, today is shabby and low and bereft and denuded of all his possessions, like dust blown up, like a stream that has gone past.[70]

In this instance the individual case offered as an example is preceded by a list of groups and individuals whom Chrysostom says have power over those in public office. It is this list which forms the focus for the passage and which is the springboard for the exemplum. Significantly this list includes eunuchs. Yet the most famous case of a manipulative and powerful eunuch at this period is that of Eutropius.[71] If, as von Bonsdorff and others claimed, Chrysostom were indeed referring to the abrupt fall of this consul, the inclusion of eunuchs in this list would surely severely undermine the effectiveness of this exemplum. That the list of those with influence should begin with lovers is surely also an unfortunate circumstance. Moreover, the features described in the exemplum are scarcely exclusive to the office of consul. The tribune (βήμα), the heralds and the crowds in the agora look rather like a general topos for the upper eschelons of public office, and are to be found in other homilies where Chrysostom is defining the common characteristics of ἀρχή.[72] The phrase σοβοῦντας κατὰ τὴν ἀγοράν or ἐπὶ τῆς ἀγορᾶς can be found elsewhere not as a feature exclusive to ἀρχή, but rather as an indication of the status accorded excessive wealth.[73] Far from confirming that the dignitary is Eutropius, a careful consideration of the passage and its context shows that there is no compelling reason for the identification, and consequently no proof on the basis of this passage that the homily was delivered in Constantinople.

If we now entertain the possibility that the homily belongs to Chrysostom's Antiochene period, we may ask if there are any cases of the dismissal of high administrative officials at Antioch or even Constantinople in the years 386–397 which might provide a convincing exemplum for the faithful in Antioch. Two candidates immediately present themselves: Lucianus and Tatianus. Lucianus, who attained the office of *comes orientis* at Antioch in 393, was executed shortly thereafter at the hands of the

---

70 PG 62, 347 5–13.

71 On the role of eunuchs, see the art., "Eunuchen," *RE* Suppl. 3, 1918, cols. 452–453. For the career of Eutropius see *PLRE*, II, pp. 440–444, s.v. Eutropius 1.

72 For example, *In princ. Actorum hom. 3*, PG 51, 93 50–94 8; *De futurae vitae deliciis* (CPG 4388), PG 51, 347 24–28.

73 See, for example, *De Lazaro concio 1* (CPG 4329), PG 48,979 5–8; *De fato et providentia or. 4*, PG 50,762 60–61.

Praetorian Prefect, Rufinus, whose influence had been sought in gaining the original appointment. This execution is considered to have been the direct result of the rebuttal by Lucianus of an illegal petition from the emperor's uncle, Eucherius.[74] Such circumstances would have provided compelling proof of the thin line which separates those in high office from imperial disfavour. Unfortunately the swiftness with which Lucianus was executed — within twenty-four hours of the arrival of Rufinus at Antioch[75] — disqualifies him in this instance. It is the marked contrast between the dignitary's former status and his present circumstances ("today [sc. he] is shabby and low and bereft and denuded of all his possessions") that is central to the impact of the exemplum.

An earlier episode in the political career of Lucianus does provide us with another possibility. Lucianus had also been stripped of the office of *consularis Syriae* at Antioch in 388.[76] The judicial function of this office would accord well with the description of one who was ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος ὑψηλός. While in office Lucianus had alienated various members of the upper classes at Antioch, Libanius included.[77] This circumstance fits the "the anger of the people (θυμὸς δήμου)", one of the compromising factors to which Chrysostom claims those in political office are subject. It is unknown whether the economic and social standing of Lucianus after his dismissal matched the description supplied in the exemplum. However, the year in which this event took place, scarcely twelve months after the riots of 387, makes it unlikely that Chrysostom had Lucianus directly in mind. The topic of the riots is introduced shortly afterwards in a somewhat remote way,[78] and while the issue of how the city was saved from destruction is still a burning topic of conversation, the tone implies that since the event itself more than a year has passed.[79]

---

74 See *PLRE*, I, pp. 516–517, s.v. Lucianus 6. The exact date of this event is unclear.

75 ZOSIMUS, *Historia nova*, V, 2, 1–4.

76 *PLRE*, I, p. 516.

77 Loc. cit.

78 PG 62, 347 57–58: προσέκρουσέ ποτε τῷ κρατοῦντι ἡ πόλις ἡμετέρα.

79 Elsewhere in his homilies Chrysostom, in referring to recent events, defines the period of time which has elapsed. E.g. *XI/rev. XV hom.* 1, PG 63, 462 4–5 (some thirty days before); *Contra ludos et theatra* (CPG 4441.7), PG 56, 268 48 (a year); *In Acta apost. hom. 44*, PG 60, 312 35 (the third year); *De S. Meletio* (CPG 4345), PG 50, 515 11–13 (the fifth year).

A more likely candidate is to be found in the person of Flavius Tatianus. Tatianus had lived at Antioch while holding the offices of *consularis Syriae* and *comes orientis* between 370 and 374. From 388 to the late summer of 392 we then find him in Constantinople as Praetorian Prefect and consul (391).[80] As *comes orientis* he had acquired a degree of familiarity with Antioch and he maintained contact with and retained his popularity there even after his promotion. Late in the summer of 392 Tatianus was indicted and stripped of the office of Praetorian Prefect as a result of the intrigues of Rufinus.[81] It is the fate he suffered after this dismissal that is particularly appropriate to the exemplum. His personal wealth was confiscated; he was sentenced to death, reprieved and then sent into exile in Lycia; various of the financial measures he had been instrumental in passing while Prefect were cancelled. His name was apparently excised from all inscriptions.[82] What is of even greater interest is that the fallout from this event was directly felt at Antioch. One of the financial measures initiated by Tatianus as Praetorian Prefect was the institution of an annual *collatio* levied on the property of the *decuriones* of Antioch, a measure apparently intended to lighten the financial burden of giving the local Olympic Games.[83] The citizens of Antioch, if not already aware of the sudden reversal in the fortunes of Tatianus, must have become apprised of these events upon the measure's cancellation.

While the careers of officials such as Lucianus and Tatianus make it equally possible for the homily to have been delivered at Antioch, this in itself proves nothing more than the dangers of identifying an at best vague exemplum with the well-known Eutropius.[84] What it does do, however, is to leave us free to examine the second passage which occurs in homily 7 unhampered by the conviction that this homily can only have been delivered at Constantinople.

The second passage in homily 7 on Colossians reads as follows:

---

80 *PLRE*, I, pp. 876–878, s.v. Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus 5.

81 Ibid., p. 878. Rufinus himself succeeded to the Prefectship after Tatianus and in this capacity organised the execution of Lucianus. On the sequence of events see Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, pp. 89–90.

82 *PLRE*, I, p. 878. See also W. ENßLIN, art., "Tatianus (3)," *RE* Halbb. 8 (1932), cols. 2463–2467, in particular col. 2466.

83 On this, see G. DOWNEY, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*, Princeton N.J. 1961, p. 442 and nn. 166–169.

84 Even at Constantinople itself, the case of Eutropius is not unique. For the careers and consequent misfortunes of Rufinus, Aurelian, Saturninus and John, see LIEBESCHUETZ, *Barbarians and Bishops*, pp. 89–92, 105–116.

> Tell me: if someone said to you, "You I hold in no esteem at all, but I esteem you because of your servants" — what could be worse than this dishonour? But if it is shameful to be esteemed on account of servants, who partake of soul and nature, so much the more shameful is it to be esteemed on account of things of a lower order, I mean the walls of houses. and halls and golden vessels and clothing. These are really ludicrous and shameful: it is better to die than so to be held in esteem. Tell me: if someone who was shabby and despicable wanted to save you from danger, as you lived dangerously in this wealth — what could be worse than that? What you say to each other about the city I wish to say to you. At one time our city offended the ruler and he ordered it to be destoyed utterly in its entirety, with men and children and houses. Such are the whims of superiors: they indulge in their power as much as they want. Power is such a great evil. The city was accordingly in the direst danger. But the neighbouring city on the coast went to petition the emperor on our behalf. Those in our city said that this was worse than the destruction of the city. Thus so to be held in esteem is worse than being dishonoured.[85]

The crucial importance of this passage has been overlooked through a failure to consider carefully its immediate context. Scholars have been unanimous in their assumption that here we have the patriarch Chrysostom speaking, describing to his flock in Constantinople how Antioch drew the ire of Theodosius I after the Antiochenes had attacked the imperial images and statues in the riots of 387.[86] This information is unique to Chrysostom.[87] The homilist's reference on two occasions to Antioch as "our city" is presumably explained by the fact that he is but a recent arrival in the capital. Now the passage itself is part of a rhetorical *tour de force* on the vanity of riches, in particular the ignominy which rich people bring on themselves by being at the mercy of their inferiors. In order to drive this point home, Chrysostom turns on his listeners the very arguments which, he says, they rehearse to each other concerning the city, namely that the intercession of the neighbouring town with the emperor on their behalf was worse than the destruction of the city. This all makes perfect sense if he is delivering the homily in Antioch. It has the additional merit of allowing the homilist to mean what he says twice with the words "our city". If, on the other hand, we assume a Constantinopolitan provenance for the homily, the statement "What you say to each other concerning the city I want to say to you" becomes an embarrassment, because we could hardly expect the fate of Antioch to be on the lips of the inhabitants of Constantinople some ten

---

85 PG 62, 347 53–348 6.

86 For example, von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 85; van de PAVERD, *Homilies on the Statues*, p. 39.

87 On this see van de PAVERD, *Homilies on the Statues*, pp. 38–42.

years after the event. If, then, homily 7 was not delivered in Constantinople, but belongs to Antioch, we need also to reassess those instances of episcopal "tone" which are connected with the denunciation of unbridled luxury.[88] The case of homily 7 shows that, without corroborative evidence, such denunciations cannot be used to establish the Constantinopolitan provenance of a homily.

In a wider perspective we must now consider whether, if homily 7 was delivered in Antioch, the rest of the series was delivered sequentially in Antioch as well, for, as we have already pointed out, the almost unanimous tendency among scholars has been to assign entire homiletic series to the same location. Among the eleven remaining homilies on Colossians it is numbers 2 and 3 on which we shall focus our attention.

Towards the end of homily 3 we find several sentences which scholars have interpreted as pointing indubitably to the Constantinopolitan provenance of this homily (and consequently, of the entire series).[89] The homilist berates his congregation:

> You do not despise me, but the priesthood. If you saw me denuded of this [sc. priesthood], then you would despise me, then I would not dare to be in command either. But as long as we sit on this chair, as long as we preside, we have both the authority and the power, even if we are unworthy.[90]

A little further on he claims to have received the mandate of an ambassador, and to have come from God, "for this is the rank of a bishop".[91] Again: "If this is distasteful to you, it is not we [sc. who speak], but the rank of bishop ... Let no-one listen to me, but to my rank."[92] As we have argued above, references by the preacher to the θρόνος or to himself as presider cannot automatically be taken as evidence of an episcopal "tone". Here unmistakeably in the combination of the homilist's remarks, however, we have proof of Chrysostom's episcopal status at the time when homily 3 on Colossians was delivered. Thus it is beyond dispute that this homily was indeed delivered not at Antioch, but at Constantinople.

Moreover, it can be confirmed that homily 2 on Colossians was also delivered at Constantinople. Homily 3 begins with comments of a kind

---

88 See n. 69 above.

89 STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, IV, p. 540; Lietzmann, "Johannes," col. 1818; von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, pp. 82–83; QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, p. 448.

90 PG 62, 324 13–18.

91 PG 62, 324 29–32.

92 PG 62, 324 46–49.

which, although common in the homilies of Chrysostom,[93] here point unmistakeably to homily 2. "Today," he remarks, "it is necessary to discharge the debt which I incurred yesterday, so that I can put it at the disposal of your eager minds."[94] As he continues the homily, he harks back to Col. 1, 15: "Ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως. While it must be stressed that references to time are not in themselves sufficient evidence for assuming a connection between two homilies,[95] in homily 2 on Colossians we find Chrysostom already broaching the contents of Col. 1, 15. Because this text was used by the Arians to support the subordination of the Son to the Father, however, he prefers to postpone his treatment ot it: "We have come upon a heretical question. This is why, since we have incurred [sc. a debt] today, we have to postpone it until tomorrow, and put it at the disposal of your eager ears."[96]

With this remark and the close accord between the terms in which it is phrased and the opening comments of homily 3,[97] the connection between homilies 2 and 3 becomes clear and is put beyond doubt. Since homily 2 is thereby tied to a homily which is firmly attributed to Constantinople, we have proof of its Constantinopolitan provenance.

If, as we have demonstrated, the 12 homilies on Colossians are then a series only by default, this requires us to consider the remaining homilies in this series solely on the basis of their own merits, in order to determine where possible their provenance or their place in the corpus of Chrysostom's homilies. Since our aim is to examine the general homogeneity of series, however, we shall not proceed to do this here. Rather, it will be instructive to examine another series to see if these findings are reflected elsewhere, or whether the homilies on Colossians represent a special case.

---

93 Debt terminology is a favourite topos. See for example *In princip. Actorum hom. 4*, PG 51, 97 1–5 and 101 9–10; *De Lazaro concio 4*, PG 48, 1007 8–14; *De prophetiarum obscuritate hom. 2* (CPG 4420), PG 56, 176 37–45.

94 PG 62, 317 14–16ai.

95 Von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, p. 85 and n. 5, places much reliance on these in arguing that the homilies on Colossians form a self-contained series.

96 PG 62, 313 50–53.

97 *Hom. 2*: ἀναβαλλομένους ... ἀκμαζούσαις ὑμῶν ταῖς ἀκοαῖς προσβάλλοντας; *hom. 3*: ἀνεβαλόμην ... ἀκμαζούσαις ὑμῶν προσβαλεῖν ταῖς διανοίαις.

II. The 15 Homilies on Philippians.

The fifteen homilies are preceded by a ὑπόθεσις or *argumentum* (PG 62, 177–182). This, Stilting noted, is of such length that it might itself be considered a brief homily.[98] The *argumentum* exhibits two further characteristics which suggest that this may indeed have been its original status. Of the six *argumenta* attached to various of the exegetical series on the Pauline epistles, that which precedes the fifteen homilies on Philippians is unique in its progression from comments of an introductory nature to direct moral exhortation. In association with this, the latter half contains expressions found elsewhere in the homilies of Chrysostom, the presence of which would tend to suggest that it was delivered before an actual audience.[99] It is also unique in concluding with a doxology.[100] Both of these features are central to the homily, but rarely found in a form presumed to have been attached after the original homilies were collated into a coherent sequence. That the *argumentum* to the fifteen homilies on Philippians was once in all probability itself a homily is a circumstance which at the outset gives one cause to speculate on the manner in which this homiletic series came into being. As a consequence of this, it is even more important that we now ask: do the homilies themselves form a clearly defined series?

(a) Passages from Philippians exegeted in the homilies.

While the fifteen homilies do cover the entire epistle of Paul to the Philippians, the exegesis does not flow on uniformly from one homily to the next. Homilies 1 and 2 provide a sequential exegesis of Phil. 1, 1–7 and 1, 8–19 respectively, but homily 2, homily 3 (Phil. 1, 18–24) and homily 4 (Phil. 1, 22–30) between them contain some degree of overlap. The exegesis from homilies 4 to 6 is again sequential, moving on from Phil. 1, 22–30 to

---

98 STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, p. 495. It extends for some four columns in the edition of Migne. For the length of *argumenta* to other series see PG 61, 9–12 (I Cor. - 2 cols.); PG 62, 9–10 (Eph. - less than 1 col.); PG 62, 501–504 (I Tim. - barely 1 col.); PG 62, 701–704 (Philemon - a little more than 1 col.) and PG 64, 9–14 (Hebr. - just over 3 cols.).

99 For example, PG 62, 180 9–10, 12, 47–48; PG 62, 182 4–5, 36–37. This is accompanied by a liberal use of the exhortatory 1st person pl. subjunctive (παρέχωμεν, μιμώμεθα etc.) and the usual exempla from contemporary social practice (e.g. PG 62, 181 3–5; 27–29).

100 PG 62, 182 40–43. On the relationship between doxology and homily, see A. OLIVAR, *La predicación cristiana antigua*, *Sección de teología y filosofía* 189, Barcelona 1991, pp. 524–526.

2, 1–4 and 2, 5–7, but there is an overlap between homilies 6 and 7 where Phil. 2, 6–7 appears twice. As we shall demonstrate shortly, this instance results from what appears to be a genuine case of sequential delivery. Homilies 7 to 10 again provide a sequential exegesis down to Phil. 3, 1–7, while homilies 10 and 11 overlap by a verse (Phil. 3, 7). The last six homilies are once more sequential in their treatment of the New Testament text.

Of the three groups where the smooth succession of pericopes is interrupted — namely homilies 2–4, 6–7 and 10–11 — the middle case is probably the only one where on internal grounds the homilies can be said genuinely to succeed one another. In the case of homilies 2–4, there is nothing, apart from the obvious exegesis of a passage from Paul's letter to the Philippians, to indicate that they necessarily hang together. Aside from the rare reference to heretics found in homilies 2 and 3, there is no similarity of theme between the three, nor any indication that they are delivered to one and the same audience. In the case of homilies 10 and 11, while there is an apparent sequence in that in homily 11 the preacher claims to take his beginning from the end of the preceding homily (a circumstance which would account for the overlap), it is not entirely certain that homily 10 is the one which is in fact referred to. The problematic nature of their relationship will be considered in the section that follows.

(b) Internal reference to a preceding homily.

The first reference to a homily which has preceded occurs in homily 6, where Chrysostom apostrophises his congregation: "Do you remember what I said before this, that it is not in great acquisitions that covetousness is revealed, but much rather in small ones?"[101] When one examines homily 5 in the present series, as also the earlier sections of homily 6 itself, this statement is, however, nowhere to be found. Indeed, a discussion of the nature of covetousness is not to be found in any of the first five homilies in the series. If "before this" is taken as referring to the homily which preceded, or even simply to a homily delivered within recent memory of the audience of homily 6, then that homily is not part of the "series" on Philippians in its present state.[102]

---

101 PG 62, 226 18–21.

102 It is possible that Chrysostom is here referring to a homily delivered prior to the series on Philippians. Elsewhere he makes it clear that he will not excuse the audience's inability to recollect comments he has made four or five weeks before. See *In Heb. hom. 4*, PG 63, 37 7–52, in particular 45–

Homily 7 opens with what appears to be a clear reference to homily 6:

> You have been told about heretical matters. Now it is opportune to give our own comments as well. They say that the words "he didn't think it was robbery" equal "to rob". We have shown that this is altogether pointless and out of place because neither is someone exhorted to humility from this, nor does he worship God in this way ,— nor even a human being.[103]

This passage seems to recall the remarks of the preacher in homily 6:

> In the same place he says immediately: "He didn't think that it was robbery to be God's equal."... I want to add comments of our own, but I am afraid of disturbing your minds. For the moment remember what I have said to subvert them [sc. the heretics].[104]

The proof of the foolishness of heretical belief has already been given earlier in homily 6, and the question of humility has been dealt with as well. Hence it seems, as in the case of homilies 2 and 3 on Colossians, that the connection between homilies 6 and 7 is reasonably certain.

In homilies 8, 9 and 10 there are no internal references to homilies which have preceded. Homily 10 does, however, contain reference to a theme Chrysostom has often introduced before the same congregation: "As I have often said, God does not pay attention to the amount of what is given but to the intention of the donors."[105] While this does recall the subject matter of the latter half of homily 2 on Philippians,[106] it cannot be considered conclusive proof of a link between these two homilies. Quite apart from his exegesis of the letter to the Philippians, this particular theme is one widely and commonly used by Chrysostom.[107]

---

47. Aside from Lent at which time homilies were delivered with greater frequency, homilies were generally delivered twice a week (Saturday and Sunday). A homily delivered immediately prior to the series on Philippians would under these circumstances fall within a four to five week period. However, it is clear from the comment in homily 4 on Hebrews that, much as he wished it were otherwise, Chrysostom himself placed little reliance on the ability of audiences to remember. On the frequency of preaching at this period, see OLIVAR, *Predicación cristiana*, pp. 641 ff.

103 PG 62, 227 5ai–228 17ai.

104 PG 62, 223 22–28.

105 PG 62, 261 13–15.

106 See, in particular, the conclusions drawn at PG 62, 198 21ff.

107 See for instance *In ep. II ad Tim. hom. 3*, PG 62, 617–618, in particular 617 32–36.

At the beginning of homily 11 Chrysostom, taking pains to fortify and instruct his listeners against the arguments of the heretics, cites Phil. 3, 7, a verse which, he maintains, the heretics pounce on.[108] While this does appear to pick up the last verse cited in homily 10, there is no certainty that it is the homily which actually preceded. Unlike the case of homilies 6 and 7, there are no verbal links between homilies 10 and 11. The immediate emphasis placed on heretics at the opening of homily 11 raises an expectation, as is indeed the case in homily 7, that in this homily Chrysostom is proceeding to take up and continue the subject matter of the homily which immediately preceded. In sharp contrast to the robust reference to heretics which we find in homily 11, however, homily 10 is completely devoid of such a mention, nor, as Chrysostom concludes his exegesis at v. 7 in this homily, is there any anticipation that the verse is of relevance to the orthodox-heterodox struggle. This circumstance, in light of the opening of homily 11, is somewhat surprising. It is, of course, not impossible that homily 10 did in fact precede homily 11. Since we should not assume that where the provenance of other homilies in the series has been determined this applies *ipso facto* to all of the homilies, until further work on the provenance of the individual homilies within the series is undertaken, the exact nature of the relationship between these two homilies must remain open to question.[109]

Within homilies 12–15 there are no internal references to the homilies which preceded. Chrysostom's mention in homily 15 of the theme of almsgiving as one which is often introduced before the present congregation (PG 62, 287 32–30ai) does not enable us to draw any conclusions. Not only does the general theme of almsgiving occur frequently within the homilies on Philippians (by virtue of the subject matter of the epistle itself), but it is, of course, common in the preaching of Chrysostom, to say nothing of that of other homilists in the early church.

In this instance we have deliberately set aside the issue of provenance,[110] in order to focus on whether the fifteen homilies on Philippians form a chronologically cohesive and succinct series. Yet even if we were to accept

---

108 PG 62, 263 32–17ai.

109 Neither homily has in itself been found by previous scholars to contain evidence of provenance.

110 Scholarly opinion on the provenance of this series is divided. For the attribution of this series to Antioch, see STILTING, *Acta SS. Sept.*, IV, pp. 495–496; and BAUR, *Chrysostom and His Time*, I, pp. 299–300. All other scholars have assigned the series to Constantinople. See TILLEMONT, *Mémoires*, XI, p. 376; MONTFAUCON, *Opera omnia*, XI, p. 188; LIETZMANN, "Johannes," col. 1818; von BONSDORFF, *Predigttätigkeit*, pp. 77–78; QUASTEN, *Patrology*, III, pp. 447–448.

the assumption that the homilies were all delivered at the same location, there is, as we have shown, very little evidence to confirm that the homilies on Philippians were delivered in sequence, in the same year, or even over the same general period of time.

Conclusion

In our discussion of two of Chrysostom's exegetical "series" on New Testament books, we hope to have called into question the generally accepted assumption that such collections of homilies are homogeneous, and were delivered sequentially and/or in the one location. The twelve homilies on Colossians contain at least two pieces delivered in different locations, while the fifteen homilies on Philippians, by virtue of the overlap in the exegeted passages and the lack of evident chronological and contentual cohesion overall, do not present themselves as a homogeneous group. Accordingly, our contention is that the homilies in such "series" need to be examined on a case by case basis in an attempt to determine their individual provenance, rather than being lumped together and attributed to either Antioch or Constantinople because of the indubitable provenance of one or two homilies in the group in question.

Assumed homiletic "traditions" also need to be re-assessed in context. References to the fact that the homilist is speaking from the θρόνος, that he is a father, that he is personally accountable for the members of his congregation or exercises προστασία over them are in themselves insufficient proof of episcopal status. Furthermore, both the homily *De capto Eutropio* and our investigation into homily 7 on Colossians demonstrate that we need to be on our guard against the temptation to align seemingly historical references in the homilies with notorious historical figures or events. The homily *De capto Eutropio* also proves that titles of homilies as they appear in the manuscripts are not uniformly worthy of trust. Again, in the absence of other indicators, mere temporal references, particularly at the beginning of a homily, should not be considered reliable evidence for coupling two or more homilies together.

Similarly, *a priori* assumptions that references to the emperor or to imperial protocol are indications of a Constantinopolitan preaching tradition need to be scrutinised carefully and individually. A number of such references may be topoi, as familiar to the Antiochene homiletic tradition as they were to congregations in Constantinople. Again, Chrysostom's denunciations of flaunted wealth and of the luxurious life-styles of members of his congregation, in particular women, were possibly as much part-and-parcel of

the homiletic repertoire in the well-to-do, cosmopolitan city of Antioch as they were in Constantinople. Much more investigation needs to be done on the degrees of wealth and poverty in Chrysostom's congregations in both locations before we can take such denunciations as conclusive proof of a homily's Constantinopolitan provenance. A systematic study of Chrysostom's references to the ascetic, eremitic and monastic life will also play a critical role in helping to determine the provenance of many homilies. All such research in the future needs to be undertaken with a healthy dose of caution and suspicion, and with a mind unencumbered by the assumptions of scholars in the past. This will, of course, substantially reduce the number of series which can be assigned beyond doubt to either Antioch or Constantinople, and may well alter the inventory of those homilies and homiletic series which are currently assigned to John Chrysostom's episcopal period.

MANUSCRIPTS AND SOURCES: 2

WONDER-WORKING IKONS AND THE LETTERS TO THEOPHILOS

Joseph Munitiz / Campion Hall, Oxford

"Conformity" and "non-conformity" depend, as we are all aware, on a point of view. By this I mean not only that "one man's meat is another man's poison", in the sense that personal preference, likes and dislikes, can be decisive in deciding what conforms and does not conform, but rather that society establishes its preferences, its likes and dislikes, its norms, in the light of which certain behaviour conforms or does not conform.

This is particularly true in the religious field, where the lines of "correct thinking" (orthi-doxa) are drawn by one religious group in a certain place, and in quite a different place by another religious group. However for the inhabitants of the eighth and ninth century Byzantine world it must have been a very confusing experience to have the highest civil and religious authorities declaring at one moment that the worship of ikons was to be condemned and then to hear them saying the opposite at roughly a 30-year interval on at least two occasions (754, the Council of Hiereia contradicted in 787 at the Council of Nicaea, then the synod of 815 contradicted by the declaration of 843 in Constantinople). To decide what constituted "conformity" and "non-conformity" in these circumstances was no easy task.

My theme in this talk is to review some of the documents that were produced towards the end of the great iconoclastic controversy and which played a part in establishing what would be regarded as orthodoxy. Scholars have tended, quite naturally, to concentrate their attention on the early years of the dispute.[1] They were aware of the immense effort deployed by both sides in the controversy to collect florilegia of patristic texts to support their positions.[2] But this activity continued into the second period of iconoclasm, as can be seen from the work of John the Grammarian in 814 at the request

---

1 A good example is H. HENNEPHOF, *Textus Byzantinos ad iconomachiam pertinentes*, Leiden 1969, who includes only a small selection from the later period.

2 Two examples: the John Damascene collection appended to his discourse in defence of ikons, and the famous *Parisinus graecus* 1115: cf. A. ALEXAKIS, *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1115 and its Iconophile Florilegium* [D. Phil thesis, Oxford 1991, subsequently summarised in an article in *Scriptorium*].

of Emperor Theophilos,[3] in favour of the iconoclasts. Thus it was only to be expected that the iconophiles would also be busy at that time.

The documents on which I would like to concentrate stem from a letter published in 1864 by the Greek scholar, Ioannis Sakkelion,[4] and entitled in the manuscripts, *A Letter of the Three Patriarchs*. Mgr Duchesne did his best to draw attention to it with a reprinting and Italian translation in 1912–13, but it remained largely ignored until quite recently (1985), when Dr Robin Cormack brought mention of it to a wider public and since then Dr Paul Speck has devoted much of his German study of the documents to this work.[5] I am happy to report that a seminar in London University, organised by Royal Holloway College, has been working for some years now on a new edition of this and the related texts: my own communication today owes very much to the combined work of this team.

The study of these documents has to begin from their manuscripts, and as far as I can see neglect of this principle has partly misled Dr Speck, who posits a tenth century date ("in der zweiten Hälfte des zehnten Jahrhunderts", p. 462) for a text found in a ninth century manuscript.[6] The *Letter of the Three Patriarchs* is preserved in its full form in two manuscripts in the library of St John's Monastery on Patmos. One of the two, Patmos 48 (siglum A) is especially remarkable as it is an uncial ninth century vellum manuscript, probably dating from about 875 (though the evidence is only internal), so only some forty years after the supposed original. It is rare in my experience to find ninth century Byzantine texts which have survived in almost contemporary witnesses. The second MS, Patmos 179 (siglum B) is a good twelfth/thirteenth century copy, independent of A and with considerable minor differences. The new readings it gives are also found in a third MS, unknown to Sakkelion, the Oxford fifteenth century Baroccianus 148 (siglum O), which may well be a copy of B. Thus B and O give a copy made by an intelligent scribe who has been slightly correcting the text. Similarly there is another corrected version in a fifteenth century Athos MS.

---

3 Ps-DAMASCENE, *Letter to Theophilos*, PG 95, 372.

4 F. HALKIN, "Les différentes éditions de la synodique à l'empereur Théophile," *AB* 7, 1958, p. 64.

5 R. CORMACK, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and its Icons*, London 1985, pp. 121–131, 261–262; before him, Cyril MANGO, *The Brazen House: A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople*, [Arkaeologisk-kunsthistoriske Meedelelser, 4, 1], Copenhagen, 1959, pp. 61–72) had referred to its undeserved obscurity; for Dr Paul Speck, see n. 6.

6 P. SPECK, *Ich bin's nicht, Kaiser Konstantin ist es gewesen: Die Legenden vom Einfluß des Teufels, des Juden und des Moslem auf den Ikonoklasmus* [Poikila Byzantina 10], Dr Rudolf Habelt GMBH, Bonn 1990, p. 462.

Iviron 381 (siglum W), but here the changes are much more substantial and a complete new ending has been added. Some 13 pages of the original are replaced by 25 pages, which make up a major variant version. The four MSS mentioned so far are miscellaneous collections of texts, some clearly intended for public reading: W has a note saying that the text was an additional reading for the Sunday of Orthodoxy. There are two other MSS, both lectionaries, that preserve a much shortened version intended for monastic reading, and with a different ending (this alternative ending was published by me in 1989[7]).

To summarise, we have half-a-dozen MSS, but three versions; so that we can be certain that very soon after the composition of this *Letter* people felt the need to "improve" the original text. This indicates that the document was being circulated and read. In fact it seems to have had an eventful history. Probably the first major revision is that preserved in W (despite the late date of this MS), and it may have been followed by the shorter alternative version. But at some point another offshoot appeared (this is the fourth text to be included in our forth-coming edition); it is known as the Pseudo-Damascene *Letter to Theophilos* and is easily available in Migne, PG 95, in the edition produced by François Combefis in 1664. It differs considerably from the original *Letter*, the text being summarised and other sources incorporated.[8] Unfortunately it is extremely difficult to date this Pseudo-Damascene version with any precision. At one point it looked as if the discovery of a manuscript in Tirana, Albania, would settle the matter: this had been dated to the end of the ninth century, and the late Professor Lackner thought it gave an extract from the Pseudo-Damascene *Letter*.[9] Unfortunately it is not clear if the text in question comes from, or has been incorporated into, the Pseudo-Damascene. Something similar may be said of the supposed quotation from this version to be found in the mid-tenth (?) century

---

7 J.A. MUNITIZ, "An Alternative Ending to the Letter of the Three Patriarchs (BHG 1386)," *OrChrP* 55, 1989, pp. 411–419.

8 Cf. J. GILL, "The Life of Stephen the Younger by Stephen the Deacon: Debts and Losses," *OrChrP* 6, 1940, pp. 114–139, esp. pp. 128–133; F. PFISTER, "Ein Zitat aus dem Alexanderroman des Ps.-Kallisthenes in einer untergeschobenen Schrift des Johannes von Damaskos," *BZ* 48, 1955, pp. 86–88; B. HEMMERDINGER, "Les sources de BHG 1387 (PG 95, 345–385)," *OrChrP* 34, 1968, pp. 145–147; S. GERO, "The Alexander Legend in Byzantium: Some Literary Gleanings," *DOP* 46, 1992, pp. 83–87.

9 Cf. J.KODER & E. TRAPP, "Katalog der griechischen handschriften im Staatsarchiv zu Tirana," *JÖB* 17, 1968, p. 212; W. LACKNER, "Ein Nachtrag zum Katalog der griechischen Handschriften zu Tirana," *JÖB* 20, 1971, pp. 246–247.

Ulpius (author of the so-called "Printer's Manual").[10] All one can say at this stage is that the Pseudo-Damascene may have appeared close in the wake of the original *Letter*, and this would be my own hypothesis, but a later date is also possible.

A very brief summary of the *Three Patriarchs* will suffice on this occasion. The letter divides into four parts: the first is mainly dogmatic, justifying the veneration of ikons on theological grounds; the second is devoted to a list of miracle-working ikons; the third is mainly historical, but in the broad sense as it contains two far-fetched pious stories involving visions of the devil in Agia Sophia; and the fourth part is the conclusion. The W version replaces the third part with a much more complete historical overview of iconoclasm. It is interesting that Pseudo-Damascene has incorporated much of the W version, usually abbreviating and often giving a garbled version.

But we can now turn to the kernel of this talk: the list of wonder-working ikons, or rather images.[11] There are four of Christ (one being the *mandylion*, the other three being in Beyrouth, Constantinople and one unspecified location), two of the Mother and Child (one being a mosaic in a Cypriot church, the other an ikon originally in the Patriarch's residence in Constantinople), four images of the Virgin-Theotokos, perhaps without the Child (one being an engraving, one a fresco, one the St Luke ikon and one an ikon in Alexandria), and one ikon of St Andrew. There is also a wall-mosaic in Bethlehem showing the Adoration of the Magi. Incidentally these twelve images either work miracles themselves or are miraculously produced, and they are mentioned in fifteen stories.

At first one might think that the listing of these fifteen stories is arbitrary: but then one notices that there is a geographical pattern hidden in the order. They begin in Palestine, with stories linked with Edessa, Lydda, and Jerusalem. Then the stories come from farther afield — Cyprus, Alexandria (two stories), Beyrouth, Constantinople and Rome, and finally one of the islands in the Aegean. The order is not strict, as we are brought back from Cyprus to Bethlehem, but there seems to be a conscious attempt to spread the references all over the Eastern *dioikesis*. Some of the stories are well known: the mandylion of Christ, the famous ikon of the Virgin painted by St Luke, the bleeding ikon of Beyrouth. But several appear here for the first time: e.g., the veneration by the Persians of the Nativity scene in

---

10 M. CHATZIDAKIS, "Ἐκ τῶν Ἐλπίου τοῦ Ῥωμαίου," *EEBS* 14, 1938, p. 411, lines 41–52.

11 Here I am drawing heavily on information kindly supplied by Dr Christopher Walter, a member (at a distance) of our Seminar.

Bethlehem; the fate of an iconoclast, out of whose mouth flies a dove only to be replaced by a crow flying in; the pierced ikon thrown into the Holy Well in Constantinople; the ikon of the Theotokos that floats to Rome and is duly recognized and venerated by the Pope (St Gregory II [715–731]); and finally the story from the island of Lemnos (which the Russian scholar, Smirnov, has suggested is a misnomer for Kimolos):

> a revered ikon of the holy apostle Andrew was set up under the baldachin (ἐν τῷ κιβωρίῳ) of the sanctuary in the church of the Holy Apostle Andrew. Once one of the priests, while preparing the eucharistic bread, [driven] by folly and madness (ἀνοίᾳ καὶ μανίᾳ) at the instigation of the wicked devil, raised the lance [i.e. the liturgical knife[12]] and going up to the ikon gouged out its right eye. Instantly and immediately divine justice caught up with him. His right eye too, with a loud plop, jumped out of his own socket and stuck in the place of the gouged hole, in the eye of the ikon.[13]

Now one obvious feature of the whole list is that it does not fit harmoniously into the *Letter*. It interrupts the type of dogmatic reasoning that precedes and follows. In fact it has all the air of being an extraneous addition, and if it were omitted no obvious lacuna would be noticed. However it is found in the oldest MS and if it was added to the *Three Patriarchs' Letter*, the addition must have been made only a short time after its composition. But perhaps before tackling the question of the authenticity of this part of the Letter, it will help to pay a little more attention to the contents.

When one examines the character of these stories, it becomes clear that the list proceeds not only geographically but also in diminishing order of authority or "respectability": after five stories that are to be found elsewhere before the composition of our *Letter*, ten stories are recounted of which only two are to be found in other sources prior to the *Letter*.

If number 15 is the most far-fetched, there are others equally remarkable for their vindictiveness: thus number 9 (which is also found in John Moschos) tells us that the Theotokos appeared in a vision to a military officer who had been mocking her ikon, and two eunuchs held him "while she traced with her holy finger along his limbs". The result is quite startling: "Suddenly the ligaments of the limbs at the elbows and feet at the

---

12 This may be the earliest dateable reference to it, as pointed out to us by Dr C. WALTER; he refers to Anastasius Bibliothecarius' mention (869–870 A.D.) *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church* [Birmingham Byzantine Series, 1], London 1982, pp. 234–235.

13 Ch. 7 §15.

ankles, fractured and they fell to the ground, like leaves breaking off a figtree (ὡς φύλλα ἀπὸ συκῆς διαρραγέντες)."[14] In the story that follows, also set in Alexandria, the disrespectful iconoclast is handed over by the Theotokos for execution.[15]

It is not difficult to understand the motives that impelled the writers of the *Letter* to include these stories. If God himself has worked miracles through the agency of ikons and has promoted their veneration, then clearly the iconoclasts are mistaken in rejecting them as un-Christian. Indeed, woe betide those who dare to show disrespect to ikons! They are liable to suffer the fate of those described in the stories — losing their limbs, an eye or their lives — when ikons of Christ, the Virgin or a saint are insulted. Moreover, one can see that Christ himself, the Virgin, and saints of the stature of an evangelist were all actively engaged in the production of ikons.

Of course the trouble with this sort of argument is that it demands a degree of credulity on the part of the hearers that many find excessive. The old Latin tag, *qui nimis probat, nihil probat*, finds full application here: by extending the bounds of faith so wide, one risks pushing one's dialogue-partner over the cliff into incredulity.

So how typical are the stories of the arguments used at the time? It is noteworthy that the official documents of the Church are much more cautious about producing them: the *horos* of the Second Council of Nicaea[16] does not mention any wonder-working ikons. Any other quasi-official documents included in the Acts of Nicaea II, such as the *Letter of the Priests of the Orient to Tarasius* or the *Synodicon* sent by Theodore, Patriarch of Jerusalem,[17] are equally reticent. Similarly the letter (dated to 814 by the author but probably written in 817) from Thomas, Patriarch of Jerusalem, recorded in the *Life of Michael the Synkellos*, refers to only two of the ikons mentioned in our *Letter*, that painted by St Luke and the *mandylion*.[18]

However one must acknowledge that in the Fourth Session of the second Council of Nicaea quite a few stories of this nature are put forward by the

---

14 Ch. 7 §9. The same story is told of the actor Gaius (or Gaïanos) in the *Spiritual Meadow* of John MOSCHOS (*Prat. sp.* 47, PG 87[3], 2901C–D).

15 Ch. 7 §10.

16 Conveniently available (with English translation) in N. TANNER (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, London & Washington 1990, pp. 133–137.

17 Cf. Mansi XII, pp. 1128, 1136.

18 M. CUNNINGHAM (ed.), *The Life of Michael the Synkellos: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations 1, Belfast 1991, pp. 64–67.

bishops.[19] And again an authority like John Damascene includes several of them.[20] They were clearly part of the normal thought patterns of people of that time, even if the particular stories used do not (on the whole) coincide with those found in the list of the *Letter of the Three Patriarchs*.

The subsequent history of our stories is soon told: although the short alternative version (TV) keeps the complete list, most of these stories are not found except in the *Letter* or its offshoots. Incidentally Pseudo-Damascene takes over only seven of the fifteen stories, mainly the better known ones.[21] It may be significant that it omits the two Constantinopolitan stories (13 and 14), especially if, as some have suggested,[22] it was put together in the capital.

How likely then is it that the heads of the three Melkite Churches in Jerusalem, Alexandria and Antioch would have included stories like this in an official letter to the reigning Emperor of Constantinople? We are brought back to the problem of authenticity, both of the whole letter and of this list in particular. For the whole letter it is worth recalling that according to ninth century Byzantine law, the deliberate falsification of documents was a crime,[23] even if this does not seem to have deterred ecclesiastical writers, intent on buttressing their own productions with prestigious names. In the case of the *Letter of the Three Patriarchs*, the arguments in favour of its overall authenticity are that the three patriarchs in question can be independently documented, some sort of synod does seem to have taken place in Jerusalem at Easter 836, and a ninth century manuscript exists containing the letter. Thus if a forgery took place, it must have occurred very near the supposed date of the letter while the supposed authors were still alive.

The arguments against the overall authenticity have been listed by Robin Cormack: the first is what he calls the "inherent improbability" that a document with this theological content and which carried as its frontispiece an ikon of the Virgin and Child was prepared for dispatch to Theophilos. But he admits himself that one striking feature of the Letter is its "amazing praise for the piety and goodness of the iconoclast emperor Theophilos", and the Patriarchs may well have adopted such a tone in the hope of converting the

---

19 Mansi XIII, pp. 21–34, 60, 64–68, for example.

20 Cf. B. KOTTER (ed.), *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, III, Berlin, 1975; in his Introduction the editor gives an excellent summary of the material available in this florilegium, pp. 17–18, 24–33.

21 Numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11.

22 GERO, l.c. [n. 8], p. 83.

23 Cf. J. IRMSCHER, "Urkundenfälschung als byzantinisches Rechtsdelikt," in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* [MGH 33, V], Hannover, 1988, pp. 665–671; he deals mainly with the *Basilika* and later.

Emperor. The other arguments rely on two apparent anomalies: (i) the size of the council supposed to take place in the city of Jerusalem under Islamic occupation, and (ii) the intemperate remarks against the Arab empire.[24] But the latter are couched in Greek and the policy of the Arabs at this moment seems to have been one of tolerance.

Thus we (and I speak here for the members of our seminar) are inclined to accept that at least half of the *Letter* is authentic. But the list of wonder-working ikons is a special case.[25] We were very struck while working on the edition of this portion of the text by the sudden stylistic change: from a very elaborate sentence structure one passes to short phrases, often lacking in grammatical and syntactical correctness. A possibility of course is that the Patriarchs commissioned such a list to be drawn up, so that it could be added to their text. But in that case one would expect it to have been added as an appendix (as is the case with the florilegium added by John of Damascus to his *Discourses against the Iconoclasts*). As it stands, the list sticks out like a sore thumb — both from a literary point of view and from a theological (the picture of the Theotokos as both vain and vindictive may be very human but hardly squares with orthodoxy).

From one point of view the question of strict authenticity may be considered an academic one: is it not more important that in the middle decades of the ninth century people were prepared to collect such stories and to propose them in a document purporting to come from the highest ecclesiastical authorities?

To some extent this novel type of argumentation does form part of a wider pattern: after so many years of iconoclast predominance, it was now possible for the iconodules to draw up a historical account of the whole period, an account inspired by their own views. Hence the interest of Dr Paul Speck's recent book, for the title of which he has adapted the title of a

---

24 CORMACK, *Writing in Gold*, p. 261. His suspicions are shared (though referred to only *en passant*) by Professor Ševčenko: "I suspect that it was doctored up, if not composed, by some committee for the re-election of an iconodulic patriarch, based either in Constantinople or Bithynia" (I. ŠEVČENKO, "Constantinople Viewed from the Eastern Provinces in the Middle Byzantine Period," *HUkSt* 3–4, 1979–80, p. 735 n. 36).

25 The same can be said of some of the latter portions of the letter: thus Professor Cyril Mango has written, "The authenticity of this document is well-attested, but one may suspect that in spite of the short lapse of time between the date of composition and the date of the manuscripts, certain interpolations showing a very detailed knowledge of Constantinople found their way into the text which was very popular" (C. MANGO, l.c. [n. 5], p. 61 n. 160).

play by Hermann van Harten, *Ich bin's nicht, Adolf Hitler ist es gewesen* (= "It wasn't my fault! It was Adolf Hitler who did it.") In the case of the iconoclast controversy, all those implicated were only too happy to heap the blame on somebody else, e.g. Constantine V, nicknamed Kaballinos or Kopronymos (the "Groom" or the "Dung-named"). The subtitle of his book is, "Legends about the influence of the Devil, the Jews and the Arabs on Iconoclasm". He is concerned mainly with texts that began to circulate in the generation before the *Letter of the Three Patriarchs*, such as the text attributed to John of Jerusalem, the *Chronicle* of Theophanes, the *Adversus Constantinum Cabalinum*. But the Pseudo-Damascene *Letter to Theophilos* has incorporated much of the legend; so also has the Alternative Version found in W. The list of stories of the wonder-working ikons belongs to this category of document: the Devil, Jews and Arabs are frequent protagonists.[26] One can understand that some people thought such a list deserved to be added to a quasi-official letter: it certainly made it much more interesting!

The occasion for such an addition is easy to find: even if our earliest manuscript was written only forty years after the original *Letter* was composed, much could have happened during those years. Between 836 and 875 the Emperor Theophilos had died, and his policy of iconoclasm had been rejected in 843. One can imagine the triumphant iconophiles wishing to consolidate the re-found orthodoxy by all the means at their disposal: the celebration of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the publication of the *Synodikon*, the dissemination of anything likely to appeal to people and convince them. Someone could easily have imagined that the official arguments of the Oriental Patriarchs would benefit from the insertion of a little dossier of edifying stories.

But from the point of view of an editor of texts the conclusion to be drawn is quite clear: the whole list deserves to be obelised as not authentic. To do otherwise would be to do a disservice to the authors of the authentic parts of the Letter, and (perhaps even more important) would do a disservice to scholarship.

---

26 Thus, Jews appear in Stories 4, 6, 12, 13, Arabs in Story 7, and in Stories 2 and 8 (strictly Persians), the Devil in Story 15.

MANUSCRIPTS AND SOURCES: 3

THE HISTORICAL METHOD OF CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS

Godfrey Tanner / University of Newcastle

My personal interest in the *De Administrando Imperio* is a reflex of the work I have done on the political and ethical writings of Aristotle. It is my theory that the original core of Aristotle's *Politics* and *Ethics* and the purpose of the genuine, as Thomas Case and I believe,[1] *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* were connected with the education of Alexander and the Macedonian Royal Pages at Mieza. To me *Politics vii* on the "ideal city state" is really a reworking of the lost *Ad Alexandrum de Coloniis* in one volume mentioned in the Diogenes Laertius listing of the Aristotle holdings in the Alexandria library, and represents Aristotle's reaction to the *Philippus* of his rival Isocrates, who had urged that monarch to detach Asia Minor from Persia and plant it thick with newly founded Greek colonists' cities to relieve the economic depression in Greece. Again, we have a problem of the "common books" of the *Ethics*[2] which deal respectively with Justice, Virtuous moral choice, and Self-control; all topics particularly relevant to the morality of a king or viceroy. These works designed for a very restricted private audience would then have been supplemented and rewritten at Athens to suit the wider audience in a republican state after Aristotle opened the Lyceum, becoming both less prescriptive and more analytical in the process.

On this analogy, the *DAI* composed for young Romanus represents a tenth century Christian essay in what I would call the "Mieza genre". It was the work of a cultured sovereign responsible for the fostering of the faculties of Law and Philosophy in the University of Constantinople, a man like Photius and Psellus who was deeply versed in the great pagan heritage of letters, yet also like them eager to reconceptualise his heritage in Christian terms. He also exhibits great practical prudence in his endeavour. If Alexander could justly complain that Aristotle later divulged elements of his private instruction, Porphyrogenitus certainly saw to it that his own work in this genre remained highly confidential.

---

1 T. CASE, "Aristotle," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th ed., Cambridge 1911, II, pp. 515–516.

2 *E.N.* v, vi and vii (= *E.E.*, iv, v & vi).

A. The Didactic Tradition

In Jenkins' edition and commentary very conclusive evidence is provided for the didactic object of the work.[3] No doubt too it is proper enough to hold that the work is in the tradition of the *Cyprian Hortations* of Isocrates, designed to stir the young son to emulate the achievements of his renowned father Evagoras of Salamis. Thus far Bury was unquestionably right.[4] However, as a Christian Emperor our author had also to reckon with other hortatory and didactic traditions. Following the formation of a *humanitas christiana* by Augustine, John Chrysostom and other cultured authors of the late fourth and early fifth Christian centuries who applied the expository techniques of the classical *grammaticus* to scriptural interpretation and the use of these writings as literary models, such studies at once came to rival traditional literary and rhetorical use of the great pagan writers.[5] Thus the *Book of Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes* and the *Wisdom of Solomon* became sources of moral counsel and political advice to set beside Plato, Aristotle, Panaetius, Cicero and Plutarch. So we must expect at times to find Porphyrogenitus seeming to resemble Solomon addressing exhortation to his son, just as at other times he will remind us of a great Greek thinker writing admonitions to a young monarch, or again of Cicero penning the *Offices* as a moral code for his son Marcus. Granting that neither Rehoboam, Romanus or the young Marcus Tullius were much improved by these endeavours, the writings have enormous value in showing the standards and priorities of the age of their composition.

One other source of instruction long popular in the orient was less obviously influential. Because of the Hindu and Buddhist belief in the many incarnations experienced by the soul as it migrated from body to body, the Jātakas, or birth stories describing how Buddha acquired merit throughout a series of previous animal incarnations, were considered instructive examples of how a soul might acquire merit stage by stage and come to attain to *Nirvāna*. This animal fable tradition was much used as a vehicle of moral instruction by the renascent Hinduism which began to supplant Buddhism from the second century B.C. Closer in date to our Christian Emperor than the earlier *Pañcatantra* is the collection of animal fables entitled *Hitopadeśa*,

---

3 CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, *De Administrando Imperio*, II (commentary), ed. R.J.H. JENKINS, London 1962, p. 1.

4 J.B. BURY, "The Treatise *De administrando imperio*," *BZ* 1906, 517–577, pp. 19–21.

5 P. BROWN, *Augustine of Hippo*, Faber 1975, pp. 259–269; cf. PHOTIUS, *Homily X*, 2 (PG 102, 569–570).

or "Book of Salutary Instruction" which found its way to Syria in a version there entitled *Khalilag and Damnag*, and finally reached Europe in a further modified form as *The Fables of Pilpay*.[6] In the *Hitopadeśa* the fables are grouped to illustrate various themes such as *Mitralabhā* or "Friend Acquisition" and are put into the mouth of a learned Brahmin Pandit appointed to instruct the dissolute young sons of the legendary King Sudarśana of Hastinapura near the modern Delhi. The aim of this "salutary instruction" clothed in entertaining fables is declared to be 'knowledge of conduct proper to all occasions and effective Sanskrit eloquence for each situation'.

This type of didactic writing seems to have reached Greece, possibly via Egypt, in the later sixth century B.C. in the Fables of Aesop, which are quoted and often parodied by Aristophanes and which still survive in the later Greek version of Babrius, or the Latin verse Paraphrase of Phaedrus. This tradition is not an obvious influence on Constantine's work. None the less, just as the Greek *Periplus of Hanno* relates that the Carthaginian discoverers of the Gulf of Guinea about 500 B.C. regarded large gorillas as barbarous prevocal men, it is conversely true that the Court of Byzantium regarded many northern barbarians as virtually animals, and many warnings and examples are drawn from their conduct in the *DAI*. Finally, though any direct Indian link is hard to prove, there was a strong cultural and social analogy between Constantinople in the days of the Isaurian and Macedonian dynasties and the courts and bureaucracies of the Mauryan Empire of Patna in the third century before Christ and the Gupta-revived Hindu Empire of the fifth to seventh centuries of our era. Examination of the *Arthaśāstra* shows as great an obsession with detail of court and ceremonial and administrative finesse as we find in the *De Caerimoniis*.

B. The Structure of the DAI

If we put aside for this discussion the brilliant but undemonstrable insights evident in the reconstruction of Manojlovic, the work as we have it falls broadly into the four sections specified in the proem, provided that we ignore certain digressions or interpolations to be discussed later. These are sections 23 to 25/55 on early Spain which have been abstracted from Stephanus of Byzantium and Theophanes, and are here interpolated into the account of Saracen history.[7]

---

6 See C.R. LANMAN, *A Sanskrit Reader*, Boston 1900, pp. 312–313.

7 JENKINS, *DAI* II, pp. 1-8.

The proem was probably written after the work in its present form, and in its style is full of rich echoes of the sentiments and language of the Septuagint version of Solomon's *Proverbs*.[8] Indeed his preliminary exhortation of the youth to wisdom in chapters 1 to 7 has much in common with our more concise proem in its argument and also with the discussion of diplomatic information on neighbours which a ruler requires.[9] Again, the *Proverbs*, chapters 8 to 9 on the contrast of wisdom and folly, could be held to correspond to the ethnographic and geographical data,[10] whether this is aimed to assist political insight or to provide data for campaigning. Again, the large collection of 'wise sayings' of chapters 10 to 22 might parallel 21 to 23's promise of an account of the history of relations between Romania and its neighbours. Finally the conclusion of *Proverbs* with several issues lumped together[11] seems analogous with an account of "innovations not only in our *city and court*, but throughout the whole Roman *Empire*" mentioned later.[12] It may therefore be suggested tentatively that the model of the royal instruction of King Solomon the Wise allegedly written for Rehoboam his son became the strongest model in Porphyrogenitus' mind in the latter stages of the composition of the *DAI* as a manual for his son Romanus II.

Following Bury we may accept that the first or diplomatic section extends from chapters 1 to 13, embodying specific advice on foreign policy issues to young Romanus, again echoing *Proverbs* in chapter 1/1 to 15. Likewise we may agree that the second or descriptive section embraces chapters 14 to 42, concerned with the origins, topography and antiquities or ethnography of neighbouring tribes and onomastic arguments relating to these issues. Again, from chapter 43 to 48/22 we have an account of current policies and foreign relations in recent times. Finally, the concluding section of innovations is represented by 48/22 to 53. Of this 49 to 50/168 deals with provincial administration and 50/169 to 221 together with 51/5 to 191 covers naval administration, whilst 50/222 to 256 deals with aspects of civil policy issues. Bury, Manojlovic and Jenkins all seem to regard the rest of the material here as undigested source data gathered for reworking.[13] Now it is clear that the work stands incomplete, for 53/493 to 510 list sources of naphtha, the essential petroleum ingredient of Greek fire, and it seems this

---

8 See R.J.H. JENKINS & G. MORAVCSIK, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperio*, Dumbarton Oaks 1947, pp. 337–338.

9 Proem, ll. 14–18.

10 Proem, ll. 19–21.

11 Thirty Wise Sayings, 22–25: "Other Corrections of Wise Sayings", 25–31 and "The Good Wife", 32.

12 Pp. 23 to 24.

13 *DAI*, II, pp. 1–2.

was transposed.[14] Again the rest of the section is all about the Chersonites, and may be meant to have stood as a final admonition of some kind. Indeed it seems that the work was not finally revised at the author's death, and might well have been intended to have a different end in its final form with more stress on domestic political advice.

In the light of this it seems we might profitably render the proem description of the fourth section taking ἀρχή in Lampe's sense II "rule, authority" and πολιτεῖα in his sense C "regulation or order of civil government" and offer the version:

> And after that what innovations have been made from time to time not only in our policy but in the whole administration of the Romans as well.

C. Style and Intent

Early in the *DAI* Constantine makes clear his stylistic intentions, namely, that the diction is to be simple rather than ornate:

> If I have used for the explanation here set out clear and, so to speak, traffic worn language, and a moderately flowing and simple stream of prose, feel no surprise, my son. I have not laboured to make an exhibition of fine writing or of a mode of expression both Atticising and doubly inflated in respect of both its exaltation and its sublimity. Rather I have been eager through common and conversational reporting to teach you those matters of which I think you must not be ignorant, and which are readily able to represent to you the intelligence and prudence which derive from a long experience (1/8 to 15).

With this we might profitably compare Thucydides' programme which, doubtless, was not far from the Emperor's mind:

> And regarding what each side said in speech, either when intending to make war or during the actual conflict, it is difficult both for me to recall the exact form of the things said which I heard myself, and likewise for people reporting to me utterances from some other source. But these speeches are here stated in the way it seemed to me each party would have spoken the essential things in the given circumstances, keeping as close as possible to the overall sentiment of the words actually spoken.
>
> On the other hand, I did not feel it right to set down the achievements of those actions done in the war simply ascertaining them from any random source, or as the matter seemed likely to me, but even concerning those events in which

---

14 It should adjoin and follow 48/28–32 on Callinicus' invention of Greek fire.

> I was myself a participant only after enquiring from other people with as much precision as possible regarding each event. This accuracy was found with effort, because those present at each set of events did not say the same things about the same events, but spoke either in accordance with their sympathy for one side, or from the limitations of their memory. Furthermore for the listeners, the non-mythical form of these accounts will perhaps seem disagreeable. But as many as will wish to discern the clear truth of what has already happened, and is all too likely again to come to pass at some future date in some same or similar form because of the nature of humankind, for them it will be sufficient if all such persons judge my record helpful. This work has been composed as a possession for ever, rather than as a prize composition for a particular event.[15]

Now it must be recognised that both these passages express almost the same view of the use, value and purpose of historical teaching, as a guide to future statesmen, a view later mirrored in Machiavelli's *Discorsi sulla prima decade di Tito Livio.* On the other hand the previously mentioned role of the "Christian classicism" of the *Septuagint* in leading the Emperor to find a Christian model in Solomon's *Proverbs* surfaces here again. The significant sentence here is *DAI* 8 to 10 above. The Greek here for "doubly inflated both with respect to sublimity and exaltation" is exactly parallel with the words of Isaiah VI: 1: "I saw the lord seated on a throne *high* and *lifted* up."[16] The two Greek key words here are ὑψηλοῦ and ἐπηρμένου: in the passage from *DAI* they are δηρμένον and ὑψηλόν. I suggest that the Septuagint has inspired the phrase and that the influence of διογκούσης adjoining it has changed the ἐπηρμένον to δηρμένον in Constantine's recollection. Here we seem again to find the same influences on style as we found on method and purpose.

D. Itineraries and Digressions

Thucydides begins his main narrative at I, 24 with an obvious quotation from the Greek *periplus* or sea itinerary tradition.[17]

> Epidamnus is a city on the right hand for one sailing into the Ionian Gulf. Beside it dwell Taulantian barbarians, men of Illyrian stock. Corcyreans colonised this city, and the Founder was Phalios son of Eratocleides, a Corinthian of the line of Heracles, summoned from the mother city in accordance with ancient custom. Further, some Corinthians and settlers from the rest of the Dorian race joined the colony. With the passing of time the

---

15 THUC. I, 22.

16 *Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, ed. L. van ESS, Leipzig 1908, p. 770.

17 A.W. GOMME, A *Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, Oxford 1939, I, pp. 179–180.

> power of Epidamnus became great and populous, but thereafter suffering civil faction strife for many years they were ultimately ruined by a war with the nearby barbarians, and were deprived of most of their power. Then finally, just before this present war, their *demos* drove out the powerful, but they in turn joining in attacks with the barbarians plundered those in the city by land and sea alike.

Here we see that the author, whether quoting from an already published *periplus* as Lionel Pearson and I think, or incorporating topographical notes from his own observations as Gomme holds, has set the scene for a narrative pregnant with significance for the gathering crisis. In either event, he has copied the style of *periplus* writing whether he borrows actual words or not; further, a *periplus* entry would have ended with the phrase "ancient custom". After this point the style changes and the approach is narrative, not descriptive.

Now Constantine Porphyrogenitus is known to rely on an *Itinerarium* of the northern frontier of the Empire for part of his description and background history. The view of the Jenkins and Moravcsik commentary on *DAI* is that 37/58 to 67, 40/27 to 34 and 42/13 to 23 all represent relics of this Itinerary. They may be rendered as follows:

> a. On this side of the Dniester river towards the part facing into Bulgaria there are deserted fortified towns at the crossing points to ford this river. The first fort we come to is that called *Aspron* by the Pechenegs because its stones look very white. The next such town is *Toungata*, the third fortress *Kraknakatai*, the fourth *Salmakatai*, the fifth one *Sakakatai*, and the sixth and last town is *Giaioukatai*. In the buildings of these old fortresses are also found some clear remains of churches and crosses hewn into the porous rock. In consequence some keep a tradition that the Romans once had settlements in that direction.[18]

Following this passage we have a very full account of the composition and tribal structure of the Turkish peoples beyond the frontiers of Rome at this point. After this historical and ethnographic account we have a further Itinerary section:

> b. In this place there are some ancient remains. First of all there is the bridge of the Emperor Trajan on the very edge of Turkey, and then Belgrade is three days away upstream from this same bridge. In this town stands the tower of the great and holy Constantine the Emperor. Again at the turning back of the river is that much renowned Sirmium, needing a journey of two days from Belgrade. Then further on upstream extends that Great Moravia the

---

18 *DAI*, 37/58–67.

> unbaptised, which the Turks have wiped out, but over it in former days Sphendoplokos was the ruler.[19]

Following this itinerary fragment we are instructed in some more detailed matters of the geography and social structure of Turkey, or, more strictly, Hungary west of the Danube in modern terms. We gather that the Eastern neighbours on the north of the lower Danube were Bulgarians occupying modern Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldavia and Bessarabia, whilst the Croats live south of the river in the West and that Great Moravia (Bohemia and Moravia) is now joined with the Turks of Hungary. The Franks to the West are doubtless those of Thuringen and the Ostmark who were part of the Frankish Empire of Charlemagne. Finally, we learn of how the jealousy of the sons of Sphendoplokos cost the Moravian nation its freedom after their King's death. The itinerary then continues again:

> From Thessalonica to the Danube, where the fortified town called Belgrade still stands, is a journey of eight days if one does not travel express post but rather by daily stages. And the Turks are spreading across the Danube river into the land of Moravia and also between the Danube and Sava rivers. Then Patsinacia extends from the lower waters of the Danube at the point opposite to Distra and their settlements dominate these regions as far as Sarkel, the fortified town of the Chazars, in which three hundred garrison troops are posted, and relieved annually.[20]

This passage again is followed by a historical explanation of this Roman force posted in the land of the Chazars for their protection when they entreated the Emperor Theophilus to build and garrison a fortified town for their safety. Thence the role of Petronas the first officer sent to Sarkel in persuading Theophilus to extend his authority from Sarkel into the territory of Cherson is explained. Here again we see the very Thucydidean use of geographical information as a first step to prompt an historical account of the region. Not so much itinerary and digression, this device is in fact a convenient framework for a comprehensive interlocking narrative of the northern tribes where the approach is determined by the direction of travel envisaged rather than chronological sequence.

With this itinerary treatment let us now compare a favourite text of the Christian later Roman World often produced in illuminated copies for the rich, the Book of Genesis in the Septuagint or Itala versions. To judge from surviving relics such as the Cotton Genesis and illuminated texts of Exodus

---

19 *DAI*, 40/27–34.
20 *DAI*, 42/15–23.

and Joshua, these "itinerary" books were the most popular parts of the Old Testament. For the moment let us look at aspects of the travels of Abraham in relation to Porphyrogenitus' "Itinerary" narrative. Here in essence the patriarch's visions and God's commands replace the order of the Imperial Road Itinerary.

In Genesis Abraham is bidden to leave Harran. Accompanied by Lot his nephew and all their dependants and flocks he travels into Canaan till he encamps by the lofty oak tree at Sychem. There the Lord appears and promises him children. Building an altar there he sets out again and encamps between Angai in the east and Bethel towards thc coast. At Bethel again he built an altar to the Lord. Thereupon he moves south into the Negev. Thence famine drove him to Egypt. Thus chapter 12: 1–10 is in essence all itinerary. But verses 11–20 on his fear of the Egyptians and decision to deceive Pharaoh over the status of Sarah, thus causing a bigamous marriage, is a historical digression such as we find in the *DAI* itinerary. The aim of the tale seems to be to set up a contrast between a righteous Pharaoh dismissing the chosen folk from his land and a later Pharaoh's treatment of Moses' people in *Exodus*. It may also be a reaction against the brother-sister marriages prevalcnt in Egyptian royal dynastic practice.

In chapter 13 Abraham moves back to the Negev, but the grazing cannot support both retinues in the drought, as reported in vv. 5–12, where Lot parts from his uncle and goes to settle in the rich plain of Siddim whilst Abraham goes up to Mamre in the oak forests of Hebron in vv. 13–18, and we are told of the depravity of the Men of Sodom. Chapter 14 is another historical aside like our emperor's accounts of Turks or Chersonites in his itinerary sequence. It refers to a major war between the sedentary urban and farming peoples of the Cities of the Plain or Vale of Siddim and Cherdolaomer of Elam and his allies, including Amraphel of Shinar, or Hammurabi of Babylon. For twelve years the cities were tributary to the King of Elam and then revolted. In the fourteenth year the Mesopotamian and eastern kings returned, seemingly to deal with a revolt of all greater Syria including the strategic city of Kadesh. After their victory over the cities of Siddim they sacked Sodom and carried off Lot and his goods, whereupon Abraham armed his retainers, defeated the Kings after pursuing them, and returned the loot to its owners after a victory over Hammurabi and his allies near Damascus. In chapter 15 we return to the spiritual "itinerary" of Abraham's dealings with the Lord. But a curious feature in the digression is the presence of a King of the Goyyim. One suspects these are migratory tribes serving as *foederati* to the Babylonian King like the Indo-European Kassites who ruled there earlier or the Mitanni of North Syria. The Hebrew text calls their king here *Tidal* and the

Septuagint offers *Thargal* in some manuscripts, which rather suggest the Greek names *Daedalus* and *Thargelos*.

Thus we see that an "itinerary" model in a spiritual as much as physical sense is evident in the Septuagint *Genesis* our author would have studied. Furthermore, many of the themes emphasised in the *DAI* have biblical parallels. A good example is the rescue of the Chersonites from a Bosporan plot by Gykia, the brave daughter of Lamachus, as recounted in 53/239–451. Her patriotism, guile and courage are most outstanding, and reminiscent of Jael in *Judges* 4 pretending to conceal Sisera or Judith slaying Holofernes by stratagem in *Judith* 13, both of whom she rivals in her destruction of her wicked husband and his Bosporan accomplices. Again, in her gentle solicitude for her handmaid who accidentally uncovers the plot there is much that reminds one of Naomi and Ruth in the Book of Ruth. Though language and events are different, thematic interest by the author in those Septuagint books prompted by his own mother's role in his succession may have made the Emperor emphasise this tale.[21]

E. Interpolations and Intentions

According to our editors Jenkins and Moravcsik there are a number of either outdated or superfluous insertions which do not contribute to the plan of the proem and which are often identifiable as well from the lack of the usual formula ἰστέον or ὅτι at the start of a section.[22] In some cases the exact source is not established, but others are virtually transcribed from earlier writers. A case in point is *DAI*, 23/1–25/57, an account of early Spain drawn from the texts of Theophanes and Stephanus of Byzantium. This is quite a different approach from the careful use of Theophanes by the Emperor, an admirer of the great historian and a patron of the man responsible for Theophanes Continuatus, in his adroit reworking of the text of his predecessor on the Saracens in 14–22. We may do well to remind ourselves that modern views of plagiarism are aggressive and based on the theory of title to real or moveable property. To the ancients an elegant unacknowledged quotation, a parody or an oblique reference, was held up as an instance of subtle artistry at once evident to the *cognoscenti*. We shall examine the other cases soon.

However, progress here demands an understanding of the evolution of the text we possess. One may fully agree that it is likely that Constantine at first envisaged a περὶ ἐθνῶν as a companion volume to his extant περὶ

---

21 On the sources of this tale, see *DAI*, II, p. 205.

22 *DAI*, II, p. 2.

θεμάτων,[23] and that our proem and chapters 1–13 were prefixed to reshape the work at a later date into a *Manual for Princes*, probably after 951 when Romanus II was thirteen.[24] So our chapters 14–42 represent a well nigh finished περὶ ἐθνῶν but the subsequent sections show evidence of unfinished composition and arrangement, doubtless due to the author's sudden illness and rapid death. But apart from the account already mentioned all of the περὶ ἐθνῶν sections exhibit consistency. Of the rest, the most often declared anomalous is the account in 30 of the devices of the Avars to take the vengeance on the Romans of Salona.

When we deal with the last part of our text, the story of Cherson, we find editors agreed that it was obsolete at time of composition, is excessively given to drama. and extremely, in view of its position, lengthy.[25] On the other hand we have noticed it is a prime example of apparent use of Septuagint models, reworking the Ruth, Jael and Judith themes from the *cultura christiana*. It is thus worth our while to look for possible similarities in the other interpolation pieces. First 48, an actual Synod minute, is part of the source documents for 47 and serves as an addendum. However, it is at the same time parallel with the theme of the Book of *Ezra*, the Lord's working on the heart of King Artaxerxes so that he granted to Ezra the priest resources and authority to resettle the Jews in Jerusalem after the Captivity and to reopen their Temple. Here Justinian who has granted the Cypriot exiles asylum and privilege at Cyzicus is moved after seven years to restore them to their island and persuade the Caliph of Baġhdad to repatriate captives in his land also, after which he granted Archbishop John special rights still exercised to this day, such as the use of purple ink.

The next case is in 51 and 52 regarding payment by the Peloponnesians for an exemption from the war service needed in Lombardy. This has some parallel with the Mosaic tithes payable because God had preserved his people and given them Canaan. Furthermore, the contentious sections constituted by 30 with its account of the cruelty of the Romans to the Avars, and their great revenge by disguise and trickery, is very like the overthrow of Moab by the guile and resolve of Ehud in slaying Eglon King of Moab in his palace: again an appropriate blending of the historical traditions with Septuagint

---

23 *DAI*, II, p. 3. But see A. PERTUSI, *Constantino Porphyrogenito de Thematibus*, Vatican City 1953, which suggests *de Them.* II is spurious.

24 JENKINS, *DAI* II, p. 5 regards the περὶ ἐθνῶν, plan of 14–42 as modified by 43–46 to become a diplomatic manual, whilst 47–51 on internal affairs could never have been part of a περὶ ἐθνῶν, and that the aim of these sections was to convert the work into a manual for his son to be presented on his fourteenth birthday in A.D. 952.

25 Ibid., pp. 205–209.

cultura Christiana. The same arguments can scarcely be applied to the tracts of Theophanes and Stephanus in the vexed 23–25 section, yet the constant philological explanations of name derivation could have appealed greatly to an author devoted to this device in Genesis and attracted him to the convenient insertion.

F. Conclusion

To modern critics the *DAI* is both incomplete, as all must grant, but also ill-formed, which may be questioned. An imperial author of the tenth century renascence eager to consolidate the classicism of antiquity which he loved with that Christian humanism to which he was devoutly committed could very readily offer a work reshaped to inform and to guide his heir in a form which might impress us as a *pastiche*, but may not have so seemed to him, even if it was not then entirely finished.

As is clear from the way Lactantius draws deliberate parallels from Livy Book I on the foundation of Rome in his account of the victory of Constantine at the Milvian Bridge, this reflected the policy of the now dominant Church he was glorifying in its triumph through the gruesome catalogue of the *De Mortibus Persecutorum*. Thus, the author himself considered the Emperor was a new Romulus refounding Rome as a Christian city.[26] Fifteen years later it was clear after the founding of Christian New Rome at Byzantium that Constantine shared the hypothesis.

If this is part of the mystique and doctrine of the Christian Empire, it will be clear that a third body of Scripture is needed. From the beginning it had seen the Septuagint as God's word, and after Nicaea it was clear that a similar later Canon of inspired works was to constitute another newer authoritative scripture, the Word of God the Son. Thoughtful men faced with Islam in the ninth and tenth centuries may well have longed for a further yet newer scripture, the Word of the Holy Spirit expressed in the recorded decrees of Church Council or Christian Emperor and in the history of the Church's peregrine life as a sojourner in this world which expresses a new Romanity. Plagiarism in such writing is not an issue, nor is literary structure an essential: the scriptures of Father and Son both exhibit and lack it. I believe our Emperor was conscious of contributing in his writing towards a new authoritative divine voice of Scripture for both the Spirit's life and the safety of secular civilisation.

---

26 See further on the Christian "new foundation" claim for Rome in Lactantius: R.G. TANNER, "The Aim of Lactantius in the Liber de Mortibus Persecutorum," *StP* 18, 1982, pp. 836–840.

Postscript

Any reader may be forgiven for suspecting a fanciful element in the suggestion of separate bodies of "scripture" for each person of the Trinity. It may indeed be too adventurous for the mid-tenth century in Constantinople: but it was not too adventurous for mid-thirteenth century Italy.

The licensing of the Franciscan Order by Innocent III with its rule of poverty made immediate problems for the Brothers after the death of the Founder. The Extreme "Spirituals" had in their number Joachim of Calabria, who propounded the view that Abraham received the dispensation of the Father and the Law, that Jesus embodied the dispensation of the Son and the Law of Love, but that Francis was the Angel of the dispensation of the Spirit and Law of Joyous poverty which God would use to restore mankind to the life of Eden. So potent was the zeal of the "Spirituals" that the General John of Parma was led to embrace this Calabrian Heresy and had to be deposed. Let us not forget Calabria had close ties to Byzantium, and perhaps, if we are right above; Joachim obtained some elements of his synthesis from that source.

Appendix

A. *Summary by Chapter of* De Administrando Imperio's *Biblical references*

Chapter	OT Instances	NT Instances	Total
1	2	–	2
13	5	2	7
19	1	1	2
27	4	--	4
29	5	3	8
30	1	–	1
36	–	1	1
45	1	2	3
49	2	–	2
53	–	1	1
Total: 10 chapters	21	10	31
Proem	36	3	39
Grand Totals 57	13		70

B. *Biblical literature sources of parallels for* De Administrando Imperio
(after Jenkins - Moravcsik)

EXODUS
3,8 : 27/32–34
13,19 : P/41
15,16 : 13/100
33,22 : P/42–43

LEVITICUS
20,24 : 27/32–34
26,8 : P/45

NUMERI
13,28 : 27/32–34

DEUTERONOMIUM
6,3 : 27/32–34
14,2 : P/35
28,7 : P/28–29

REGES
I,25,21 : 29/167-168
II, 11, 3–5: 45/3–4
IV 1,10–12 : 13/98–99

PARALIPOMENA
I,21,3 : P/34
II,23,20 : P/5

ESDRAS
1,2 : P/36

IOB
5,19 : P/34–35
9,2 : 29/143–144

PROVERBIA
1,5 : 1/5
1,7 : 30/2
1,9 : 1/4
2,6 : P/4
6,3 : 13/13
8,15 : P/48
10,1 : P/2
17,13 : 29/167–168
17,21 : P/2–3
23,5 : 13/12

SAPIENTIA SALOMONIS
3,1 : P/34–35
4,3 : P/32–33
19,8 : P/42–43

SIRACH
1,25 : P/4

ISAIAS
10,18 : P/28–29
33,14 : P/31
49,23 : P/45-46
50,4 : P/3–4

EZECHIEL
40,2 : P/36–37

DANIEL
9,27 : 19/8–9

ZACHARIAS
9,15 : P/31

EVANGELIUM MATTHAEI
1,6 : 45/3–4
2,12 : 45/11
5,14 : P/37–38
24,15 : 19/8–9
27,8 : 53/450–451

ACTA APOSTOLORUM
4,13 : 13/150
7,54 : 29/210
28,1–5 : 36/18–20

EPISTOLA ad GALATAS
1,15 : P/35

EPISTOLA ad TIMOTHEUM
II,4,1 : 29/203

EPISTOLA IOANNIS
II,8 : 29/203

EPISTOLA IACOBI
1,17 : P/4–5

APOCALYPSIS
20,9 : 13/98–99

EVANGELIUM APOCRYPHUM
(ed. London, 1820)
p.17 : 45/6–8

PSALMI
5,9 : P/44–45
9,7 : 29/167–168
17,34 : P/36–37
21,31 : 49/62–64
32,14 : P/38–39
39,3 : P/32
44,5 : P/43
54,6 : 13/100
67,20 : P/40
71,9 : P/45–46
71,10 : P/38
71,11 :P/38–39
71,17 : P/8
77, 6–7 : 49/62–64
88,37 : P/33
108,15 : 29/143–144
118, 5 : P/44–45
118,133 : P/32

C. *Implications of the Statistics*

It will be observed that we have fifty-seven quotations or close reminiscences from the Septuagint and thirteen from the canonical New Testament, quite apart from our suggested instances of thematic influences — largely from *Genesis* — in the main text of this paper. Granting that the proem would have to date from the virtual completion of the rest of the text as we have it, it remains noteworthy that it contains thirty-six of the fifty-seven OT citations, but only three of the thirteen NT examples in the whole text. This certainly bears out Peter Brown's contention that the Septuagint was the basis of the literary *cultura christiana* of the late Empire. Further, the heavy usage of references to the OT in our proem stresses the hortatory and instructional use of the Septuagint in civil life as much as in church preaching.

If we accept the general verdict of scholarship that the *DAI* represents a revision and expansion of an incomplete περὶ ἐθνῶν for didactic purposes to serve as a fourteenth birthday present for young Romanus, then the Septuagint citations may identify at least some of the inserted materials without denying that Jenkins and his colleagues have identified other probable additions in their *DAI* volume II, all inserted to meet the new purpose of the revised work. However, OT citations occur in only eight of our fifty three chapters — numbers 1, 13, 19, 27, 29, 30, 45 and 49, whilst NT citations occur in a mere six chapters — numbers 13, 19, 29, 36, 45 and 53. Only chapters 36 and 53 confine their biblical quotations to the NT, while the chapters 1, 27, 30, 45 and 49 refer only to the Septuagint and ignore the NT text. Apart from the richly Biblical proem, chapter 29 with five OT and three NT references is the most biblical section, but chapter 13 comes very close with five OT and two NT references. The other chapters quoting both Testaments are 45 exhibiting one OT with three NT passages, and 19 with one from each Testament.

Let us now review the contents of these significant sections. Chapter 1 continues addressing Romanus in a strongly hortatory vein, and must therefore with the proem form part of the revisionary additions. Again, chapter 13 is a direct admonition to young Romanus not to follow the example of his father's late colleague in Empire Romanus I, and is clearly an interpolation into the structure of the original περὶ ἐθνῶν. Chapter 19 is very brief, containing one citation from each Testament and dealing with Caliph Omar's treatment of Jerusalem. The first sentence looks certainly original; the rest may be an addition to add colour and inspiration for the

reader. The scriptural elements in chapter 27 occur in the story of Narses and the Lombards only. One may suggest it was added for its cautionary value and as lively material for a fourteen year-old reader. If so, one might propose that the original text should have stopped at line 14 τῶν Ῥωμαίων and resumed at οἱ δὲ Λαγούβαρδοι in line 30, then stopping again at line 31 after Τοῦρκοι and resuming at line 46 with καί ἔκτοτε ἐκστρατεύσαντες. Then in chapter 29 the biblical phrases are all in the later part of the story of Soldan, which again is a good cautionary tale for a monarch's heir. This suggested insertion would begin at line 119, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀυτὸν εἶδε γελῶντα, and end when the discussion of Ragusa resumes at line 217. Chapter 30 begins with an exhortation and may all be an amplification in lines 1–59 of the Dalmatian story dawn from a lively chronicle to hold Romanus' attention. On the other hand the use of St. Paul's experience related in *Acts* to identify Melita in chapter 36 is not hortatory, and the whole section may have been left as it was in the draft of the περὶ ἐθνῶν. But though chapter 45 uses scripture for a similar ethnographic purpose, its very contemporary contents suggest it belongs with chapter 13 in style, whilst the hortatory tone of 49 also tends to set it down as coeval with chapters 1 and 13. Finally, thc long tale of Cherson and the noble Gykia in chapter 53 makes a sombre story worthy of Apuleius or Heliodorus and as exciting as the story of Joseph in Genesis, all points suggesting it was part of the revision programme.

We may conclude that in revising his manual for his son's edification and entertainment the Emperor has adopted the *Hitopadeśa* method of combining instruction with memorable and moving traditional stories, but carefully tying each to scripture and orthodox piety.[27]

---

27 This paper was first delivered at the Centre Byzantin in Athens whilst the author was residing at the British School.

MANUSCRIPTS AND SOURCES: 4

TRIODIA MANUSCRIPTS: THE PROBLEM OF CLASSIFICATION

Andrew Quinlan

The history of the development of the Triodion (that is the liturgical book in use in Churches of the Byzantine tradition throughout the pre-Pascal period), is linked to the vicissitudes of the study of Byzantium in general and of the Church and liturgical life of the Byzantine Commonwealth in particular. It is however, a sad fact that, due in part to the wide-ranging nature of the study of the Christian liturgy, with its tendency to broad-based comparisons, and long chronological leaps (owing for the most part to a lack of continuity in primary sources), this most basic element of the religious, artistic, intellectual and even daily life of Byzantium has been neglected by the main stream of Byzantine Studies.[1] This is not to say that the liturgy has been completely overlooked, but it should become clear through this brief paper that much work in the past has been undermined by its fragmented nature and a lack of a solid methodological base. It should also become clear that the way forward lies in a multi-disciplinary approach founded on a systematic study of the primary sources.

Just as contemporary historians of the secular life of Byzantium still turn with profit to the pioneering work of the seventeenth century, the same holds even more true for the Byzantine liturgiologist. For the study of *Typika* (monastic regulations), the work of the great Leo Allatius (1586–1669), a native of Chios who spent most of his life in Rome, of the Lutheran scholar Johann Fabricius (1668–1736), and of the French bibliophile Jean Baptiste Cotelier (1627–86) are still of fundamental importance.[2] The basis for a continuing study of the *Euchologion* (the book of sacraments and related services) was laid in 1647 by the French Dominican Jacques Goar (1601–54) with the publication of his *Euchologion sive rituale Graecorum.*[3] The mid-nineteenth century in its turn saw a rebirth of interest in Byzantine

---

1 R.F. TAFT in his article, "Mount Athos: A Late Chapter in the History of the Byzantine Rite," *DOP* 40, 1988, p. 179, points out that even within the context of the study of Mt. Athos only scant attention has been given to its place in the development of the Byzantine Liturgy. Few stones can therefore be thrown at the non-specialist for a lack of interest in this area.

2 P. de MEESTER, "Les typiques de fondation," *RSBN* 6, 1940, p. 489.

3 A. STRITTMATTER, "The 'Barberinum S. Marci' of Jacques Goar," *EphLit* 47, 1933, pp. 329–367.

hymnography with the contribution of Pitra, Christ, Bouvy, Stevenson, and Krumbacher.[4] At the same period Russian Orthodox scholars were beginning to make a systematic study of their own liturgical heritage. Porfiri Uspensky and Antonin Kapustin had begun to study the manuscript tradition of the liturgy, but it was the outstanding scholar Alexei Afanasevich Dmitrievsky (1856–1929) who initiated a systematic program of study and publication of the primary sources.[5] I.A. Karabinov, who was a contemporary, if not a comrade in arms of Dmitrievsky, holds a central place in the study of the Triodion.

From the second half of the nineteenth century through to the twentieth, there was an increasing interest in Byzantine church music led by scholars such as Thibaut, Dom Ugo Gaisser, Amedée Goustoué, H.J.W. Tillyard and Egon Wellesz.[6] One of the major outcomes of this movement was the setting up, in 1931, of the *Monumenta musicae byzantinae*. The publication in this series of the oddly named *Triodium Athoum* in 1975 by Professor Enrica Follieri and the musicologist, the late Professor Oliver Strunk, is one of the few studies made on manuscript material from within the corpus of Triodion hymnography in the past 200 years.[7] As well as an increasing interest in church music, the present century has seen a renewal in the history of liturgical studies. It is the merit of the German liturgiologist, Anton Baumstark (1872–1948) that there is now an awareness among scholars of the need for a broader and more "comparative" perspective on the development of the liturgy of any particular Church.[8]

Professor Robert Taft has proposed an extension of the thought and method of Baumstark in what he calls the "Mateos School" centred around the Oriental Institute of Rome.[9] Although of great use, a closer examination of the work of those liturgiologists listed by Taft as making up this school would, however, lead the Byzantinist well outside the geographical and cultural boundaries of their field.

---

4 E. WELLESZ, "Words and Music in Byzantine Liturgy," *The Musical Quarterly* 33, no. 3, 1947, p. 297.

5 M. ARRANZ, "Les archives de Dmitrievsky dans le bibliothèque d'État de Leningrad," *OrChrP* 40, 1974, pp. 61–68.

6 E. WELLESZ, "Words and Music," p. 297.

7 E. FOLLIERI & O. STRUNK, *Triodium Athoum*, Monumenta musicae byzantinae ix, Munksgaad 1975.

8 P. BRADSHAW, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, London 1992, pp. 57–63; R.F. TAFT, "The Structural Analysis of Liturgical Units: An Essay in Methodology," *Worship* 52, 1978, pp. 314–315.

9 TAFT, "Structural Analysis," p. 314.

Even if the foregoing sketch of the history of the Byzantine liturgy has been far from exhaustive, it can not fail to include the work of two other scholars in this field, given both its general relevance to the liturgy and its particular importance in the study of the Triodion. The publication of Professor Enrica Follieri's *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae graecae* from 1960–66 represents an essential tool in the study of any aspect of Byzantine literature both secular and religious.[10] It is also to another Italian Byzantinist, the late Professor Giuseppe Schirò, that we owe the publication of the *Analecta hymnica graeca*.[11] This work, by a team of scholars, is in the best tradition of European scholarship and thanks to this one series of publications from the University of Rome, the amount of hymnography that is available for study has increased greatly. The liturgical and historical importance of this publication can not be over-estimated. In my own work on the Triodion manuscript Sinai Greek 734–735, Schirò's *Analecta* has been of great use in the confirmation of the presence of the work of Clement in a cycle of triodia found in this and other manuscripts.[12]

It is against this historical background of scholarship, sometimes polemical, theological, philological or musicological, that any attempt to throw more light on the pre-Easter liturgy of the Byzantine Empire must be conducted.

The intense and perhaps unique interest shown in the Triodion in post-Tridentine Catholic Europe from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, owes its origins to the presence in this book firstly of the *Synaxaria* (notes on the significance of the day) of the fourteenth century Greek theologian and historian Nicephorus Callistus (c. 1256–c. 1335) and otherwise known as "Xanthopoulos",[13] and secondly to the presence, on the Second Sunday of Lent, of the feast of the chief exponent of hesychasm, St. Gregory Palamas (c. 1296–1359).

Already in his study, *De libris ecclesiasticis Graecorum* (1645), Leo Allatius had drawn attention to several errors in doctrine to be found in various parts of the Triodion, but principally in the *Synaxaria* of

---

10 E. FOLLIERI, *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae graecae*, 5 vols. (= TS 211–215), Vatican 1960–66.

11 *Analecta hymnica graeca e codicibus eruta Italiae inferioris*, I. Schirò consilio et ductu edita, 12 vols., Rome 1966–80.

12 A. QUINLAN, *Sin. Gr. 734–735 Triodion*, unpublished dissertation, Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Rome 1991.

13 A. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, "Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," *BZ* 11, 1902, pp. 38–39.

Xanthopoulos.[14] The nature of these errors need not detain us here, but their enumeration by such a well respected scholar as Allatius helped bring the Triodion under the scrutiny of a number of bodies set up by the Papacy to watch over the well-being of the Oriental Churches. Gregory XIII (1572–85) nominated a Commission of Cardinals for the Eastern Churches.[15] Clement VII (1592–1602), in whose reign was signed the Union of Brest-Litovsk of 1596 which brought some millions of Orthodox under the rule of Rome, set up a Commission to study Orthodox liturgical texts. It was not however, until 1718 that Clement XI (1700–21) set up a Commission whose sole aim was to examine the Triodion. One year later the polymath, Angelo Maria Querini was nominated to this commission.[16] Motivated by the desire to expunge the errors of faith that had been introduced into the Triodion by the schismatic Greeks, the Commission undertook the close examination of a number of manuscript Triodia. Dom Norbert Cappuyns in his unpublished Doctorial thesis for the Oriental Institute submitted in 1935, provides us with the information that the manuscripts in question were Vat. Gr. 769 and 771, Reginae Svecorum 59, most probably Barberini 339 and 484 and finally Vat. Gr. 2118.[17] In 1731 Querini, on his own behalf published a partial edition with Latin translation of Bar. 484 with a *Diatribe* on the history of the Triodion.[18] It would seem that this same spirit of return to the ancient manuscripts motivated Fillippo Vitali's publication of a number of liturgical texts in Rome in 1738. His Triodion draws heavily on Vat. 771 and his Pentecostarion published in the same year is even more faithful to this manuscript.[19] Notwithstanding both the work of Querini and Vitali, the

---

14 N. CAPPUYNS, *Le Triodion. Étude historique sur sa constitution et sa formation*, unpublished dissertation, Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Rome 1935, pp. 129–133.

15 For an overview of Gregory's relations with the East, cf. G. Levi della VIDA, *Documenti intorno alle relazioni delle chiese orientali con la S. Sede durante il pontificato di Gregorio XIII* (= TS 143), Vatican 1948.

16 CAPPUYNS, *Le Triodion*, p. 136.

17 CAPPUYNS, *Le Triodion*, p. 141.

18 A.M. QUIRINI, *Officium quadragesimale recognitum, et castigatum ad fidem praestantissimi Codicis Barberini, in latinum sermonem conversum, atque diatribus illustratum*, Rome 1721.

19 R. MAISANO, *Il Codice Vat. 771*, unpublished dissertation, University of Rome 1968–69; A. LABATE, *Cinque inni bizantini inediti per le solennità della Pasqua*, Messina 1980. The introductions to both these works draw attention to the use made of Vat. 771 by Vitali. Cf. also G. BERTONIÈRE,*The Historical Development of the Easter Vigil and Related Services in the Greek Church, Orientalia christiana anelecta* 193, Rome 1972, p. 175.

subsequent publications of the Triodion at Rome, Bologna and Venice differ little in content from those that pre-date the activity of these scholars and the various post-Tridentine Papal Commissions. It is therefore unfortunate that the rich store of hymnography to be found in the two manuscripts that lie behind the work of Querini and Vitali, that is Bar. 484 and Vat. 771 has been neglected even by those few scholars who have interested themselves in the Triodion. The publications of the eighteenth century flagged the existence of larger collections of hymnographic material to be found in the manuscript tradition than in the "official" texts in use in the Churches of the Byzantine tradition, but it was not until the beginning of this century that the task of systematically studying this material was begun.

In 1910 the Russian liturgiologist, I.A. Karabinov published the results of 10 years of research in his *Postnaja Triod*.[20] His worked is based on the study of 41 Greek Triodia manuscripts, as well as several other Greek liturgical and hymnographic manuscripts and Slavonic translations.[21] Although both the manuscripts studied by Querini and Vitali are among those also studied by Karabinov, the Russian scholar appears not to know these earlier works. However, Karabinov's work does contain even graver flaws than this oversight. On close reading it becomes clear that the sheer mass of hymnographic material that Karabinov undertook to study has rendered the resulting publication almost impossible to understand and use as a basis for further study. It is not surprising that Karabinov's work has remained somewhat neglected. It is clear that not only does Karabinov's work on the Triodion lack an organising principle, but that as far as the Greek manuscript tradition is concerned, Karabinov is not whole-heartedly committed to finding one.[22] Before examining Karabinov's methodology in detail, it may help to illustrate many of the issues surrounding the difficulties in the study of Triodia manuscripts, by outlining briefly my own work on three such manuscripts, Sin. 734–735, Vat. 771 and Grottaferrata D.b.1.[23]

---

20 I.A. KARABINOV, *Postnaja Triod. Istoricheskij obzor ejo plana, sostava, redaktii i slavjanskikh perevodov*, St. Petersburg 1910.

21 KARABINOV, *Postnaja Triod*, pp. iv–vi.

22 KARABINOV, *Postnaja Triod*, pp. 205–216.

23 For Sin. 734–735, cf. V. GARDTHAUSEN, *Catalogus codicum Graecorum*, Oxford 1886, pp. 159–160; A. DMITRIEVSKY, *Bogosluženie strastnoj i paskhalnoj sedmits vo sv. Ierusalime ix–x v.*, Kazan 1894, p. 343; K. CLARK, *Checklist of the Manuscripts in St. Catherine's Monastery Mount Sinai, microfilmed for the Library of Congress*, 1950, Washington 1957, p. 9; BERTONIÈRE, *Historical Development*, p. 246; FOLLIERI & STRUNK, *Triodium*, Pars Suppletoria, p. 33. For Vat. 771, cf. its entry in M. BUONOCORE, *Bibliografia dei fondi manoscritti della Biblioteca Vaticana*

Although it would seem certain that Vat. 771 is the work of a scribe of Grottaferrata, there has so far been no location of origin proposed for the other two manuscripts. However at this stage in the study of Triodia manuscripts, exact dating and provenance are only two of a complex group of issues.

It should be underlined that in the study of the Triodion, the printed text of whatever edition can only merit the status of "rough guide" to the processes that were at work on the formation of the liturgical life of the Byzantine Empire. The general outline of these forces, can be found in the works of the Russian liturgiologists, I. Mansvetov and M. Skaballanovich.[24] Their work can be found summarised in articles by Professor Miguel Arranz and more lately by Taft.[25] To further simplify these stages greatly, one can nominate four principle centres of production and transmission of liturgical material: the Church of the Anastasis in Jerusalem,[26] and the Monastery of St. Sabba,[27] the Great Church (*Hagia Sophia*) in Constantinople,[28] and the Monastery of the Studion in the same city.[29] The complex interplay between these four centres was to last until the final victory of what has been called the "Neo-Sabbite" Typikon.[30] Traces of this interplay can easily be recognised even in the printed texts of the Triodion, with its rites for Good

---

(1968–1980) (= ST 261), II, Vatican 1986, p. 852. For D.b.1, cf. A. ROCCI, *Codices Cryptenses seu Abbatiae Cryptae Ferratae in Tusculano digesti et illustrati*, Tuscolo 1883, pp. 354–355.

24 I. MANSVETOV, *Cerkovnyj ustav (Tipik), ego obrazovanie i sudba v greceskoj i russkoj cerkvi*, Moscow 1885; M. SKABALLANOVICH, *Tolkovyj Tipikon, Objasnitelnoe izloženie Tipikona s istoriceskim vvedeniem*, Kiev 1910–15 (page ref. = photomechanical reprint in one volume, Rome 1967).

25 M. ARRANZ, "Les grandes étapes de la liturgie Byzantine: Palestine-Byzance-Russie. Essai d'aperçu historique," in *Liturgie de l'église particulière et liturgie de l'église universelle*, *Bibliotheca Ephemerides liturgicae*, Subsidia 7, Rome 1976, pp. 43–72; TAFT, "Mount Athos," p. 182.

26 C. RENOUX, "Hierosolymitana. Aperçu bibliographique des publications depuis 1960," *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 23, 1981, pp. 1–29.

27 S. VAILHÉ, "Les écrivains de Mar-Saba," *EO* 2, 1898, pp. 1–11, 33–47.

28 O. STRUNK, "The Byzantine Office at Hagia Sophia," *DOP* 9–10, 1955–56, pp. 175–202, reprinted in STRUNK, *Essays on Music in the Byzantine World*, New York 1977, pp. 112–143; J. MATEOS, *Le typikon de la Grande Église, Saint-Croix, no. 40, X siècle*, *Orientalia christiana analecta* 165 & 166, Rome 1962–63; S. PARENTI, *Il Signore della Gloria. Preghiere della "Grande Chiesa" bizantina*, Milan 1988, pp. 117–137.

29 SKABALLANOVICH, *Tolkovyj Tipikon*, pp. 395–396.

30 TAFT, "Mount Athos," pp. 187–190.

Friday (Palestine),[31] its inclusion of the special hour the *Trithekte* (the Great Church),[32] and the three and four ode kanons of St. Theodore the Studite.[33] However, even in the printed Triodion, most of the hymnographic material is anonymous and untraceable to any geographic location.

As the eighteenth century publications of Querini and Vitali (based as they were on only two manuscripts) had shown, the manuscript tradition offers a greater variety and quantity of hymnographic material than is found in the more "standard editions" of the Triodion that pre- and post-date their work. A close study of the manuscript Triodion Sin. 734–735, reveals not only the presence of a complete cycle of three ode kanons and a collection of *stichera* attributed to a poet Clement, but also several other longer kanons, some with attributions, most without, and over 200 shorter hymns, almost all anonymous.[34] Although Sin. 734–735 is one of the richest Triodia manuscripts in unedited material to come to light, it can be appreciated that any attempt to categorise all this anonymous hymnographic material within one manuscript, and then to use it as the basis for even further classification and comparison of other manuscripts, is fraught with difficulties. Given therefore, the obstacles presented by the vast content of the manuscript tradition, it is not surprising to see that Karabinov relies not only on this aspect of Triodia, but also on that of their form or the arrangement of their content to place them in various categories.[35] In this way it could be said that the liturgical hymnographers and the scribes that eventually transmitted their work are involved in a type of "equal partnership". Karabinov was well aware that all, even the earliest manuscripts he studied, represent composite works, made up of independent elements. The original constituent elements such as the cycle of triodia of St. Theodore the Studite, only come down to us in a variety of combinations with other independently evolved elements such as the triodion cycle of Joseph the Hymnographer or the cycle of idiomela hymns from Palestine. It is therefore very difficult, if not impossible, to be certain of the original intention with which many of the

---

31 S. JANERAS, *Le Vendredi-saint dans la tradition liturgique byzantine. Structure et histoire de ses offices*, Analecta. Liturgica 13 = Studia Anselmiana 99, Rome 1988.

32 PARENTE, *Il Signore*, p. 131.

33 For the question as to who is the Joseph, author of the cycle of triodia in the printed text, cf. KARABINOV, *Postnaya Triod*, pp. 135–137; I. TOMADAKES, *Ioseph ho Hymnographos. Bios kai ergon*, Athens 1971, pp. 82–88; D. STIERNON, "La vie et l'oeuvre de S. Joseph l'Hymnograph. A propos d'une publication récent," *REB* 31, 1973, pp. 264–265.

34 QUINLAN, *Sin. 734–735*, pp. 258–263.

35 KARABINOV, *Postnaya Triod*, pp. 211–216.

hymns of the Triodion were composed as the position they occupy even in the manuscript tradition may have been determined many years after their composition.

If we now examine Karabinov's system of classification in detail we find that he describes the first and oldest type of Triodion manuscript as follows; it is characterised by the almost superabundance of hymnographic material among which are found the three ode kanons by Clement and the acrostic cycle by Joseph the Hymnographer.[36] This category contains the Triodia manuscripts Sin. 734–735, Vat. 771 and Grottaferrata D.b.1. All three are linked by the presence of the triodia of Clement, and Vat. 771 and D.b.1. are further linked by the presence of the acrostic triodia of Joseph the Hymnographer. Karabinov excludes that all three manuscripts derive from a common prototype, as they differ to the extent they transmit the hymnographic material both of Clement and Joseph. As far as this type one Triodion manuscript category is concerned, it is the content that forms the most important common element. All three manuscripts of this group, in fact, have their own method of arranging the hymnographic material. The fact that all three adopted a non-liturgical ordering of the hymns, and especially the disposition of the material in the case of Vat. 771, allows us to see clearly the role played by the scribe as editor. All the idiomela, the most typical of the Palestinian elements in the Triodion, are not given in Vat. 771 on the days where they should be sung, but are given all together in the first eight folios of the manuscript. Even within the Constantinopolitan elements, the lay-out of Vat. 771 permits us to detect their independent evolution. For each weekday the shorter hymns of Joseph (*stichera* and *kathismata*) are given first. Then come, ode by ode, the triodia of the day, first the non-acrostic triodion of Joseph, next the acrostic triodion, followed by the triodion of Clement, and finally the triodion of Theodore. The office for the day is concluded by the shorter hymns of Theodore. As the hymns are not collected together either by type or by author, it is clear that this type of manuscript has been complied from a number of autonomous prototypes.

Karabinov's second type of Triodion manuscript has the same tendency to non-liturgical arrangement of hymns as category one, but he suggests that a process of abbreviation has begun to take place. In this type of manuscript the works of Clement are never found and only rarely do we come across those of the acrostic Joseph. Karabinov proposes that this type two Triodion has more or less the same form as Sin. 734–735, but it is not as rich in

---

36 KARABINOV, *Postnaya Triod*, pp. 149–168; TOMADAKES, *Ioseph ho Hymnographos*, pp. 209–214.

content. In this category he places Sin. Gr. 733 (eleventh century), Sin. Gr. 736 (A.D. 1028) and Bar. 484 (A.D. 1120). Roughly contemporary with this second group of Triodia manuscripts are those of Karabinov's third group. They share the smaller content of type two but they differ in the arrangement of their content. Unlike the first two types of Triodia, type three manuscripts conform to a more liturgical arrangement of their hymns. Some manuscripts such as Athens 626 (tenth century) organise only the idiomela, while others such as Lav. G. 15 and Pii II 30 extend this liturgical arrangement to the shorter hymns of Joseph and Theodore. In this type three manuscript the Sundays and Cheese Week (the last week before the beginning of Lent proper) are still undergoing a process of evolution and no two manuscripts are in agreement. The fourth type of Triodion manuscript in Karabinov's system is much richer in rubrics than earlier types and seems to conform more to the Neo-Sabbite Typikon that was, from the late twelfth century onwards, becoming the dominant style of monastic typikon in use through-out the Empire. The final or fifth category comes into existence in the thirteenth century and lasts up to the period of the printing press. During this period the final touches were made to the Triodion, and the feasts of St. Gregory Palamas, St. John of the Ladder and St. Mary of Egypt became fixed on their respective Sundays.

Having thus briefly surveyed Karabinov's system for Triodia manuscripts, it should be noted that the foregoing categories represent the result and not the starting point of Karabinov's extensive research, and despite the fact that he does mention in passing the possibility of dividing all manuscripts into Western and Eastern types and isolating those that demonstrate some affinity with the typikon of Patriarch Alexis,[37] he shows little interest in speculation on the reasons that lie behind the obvious diversity of the manuscript tradition nor in proposing any criteria that would enable us to establish any cross-influence between the various categories. The bulk of his study in fact had been organised around the poetic contributions made to the Triodion by hymnographers whose names have come down to us. However, the questions that Karabinov's categorisation raises are numerous. How isolated were the original composers of the hymnody one from the other? Does their work constitute an attempt at imitation, doubling or substitution? What motivated the scribe/editors of the larger manuscripts to combine various collections in such an impractical and unusable way? Why was the process of "abbreviation" so swift and so seemingly uniform? As the second and third categories are contemporary can there be a reason as to why one group

---

37 KARABINOV, *Postnaya Triod*, p. 213.

persisted in ignoring a more liturgical ordering of material, while the other group consistently opted for what seems to us the most logical method of arranging more or less the same hymnographic material? Furthermore if we apply Karabinov's system to the three Triodia manuscripts, Sin. 734–735, Vat. 771 and Crypt. D.b.1, we see at once that in many ways these categories, and especially category one, simply beg the question. The three above mentioned manuscripts are linked to a certain extent by common content, but the mass and variety of this content also distinguishes one manuscript from the other. By using the diversity of content as a common element Karabinov has created a category for manuscripts that belong to the same category because they are different from each other! The mass of short anonymous hymnographic material that distinguishes these three Triodia from each other and from the rest of the manuscript tradition, contains a major obstacle to the clarification of the inter-relations between various manuscript Triodia. It is obvious that the publication of as much of this material as possible will go some way to setting up valid criteria for its classification, but it seems that there is not a great deal of interest shown among liturgiologists and even less among scholars of Byzantine literature in undertaking this onerous task.

Nevertheless there has been some interest shown in the broad outline of the manuscript tradition of Triodion material by the musicologist Oliver Strunk, in the already mentioned joint publication with Enrica Follieri, the mis-named *Triodium Athoum*. It may be that one can find a glimmer of hope for the future even in the fact that this eminent scholar chose such a loose description for his work. Perhaps some insight into the development of the Triodion can be found in manuscripts that would not usually be classified as Triodia. As has been seen from the work of Karabinov, the internal divisions and traces of the evolution of the Triodion can be seen even in the earliest manuscripts that have come down to us. Thanks to the fact that the manuscript tradition is constant in its attribution of certain compositions to Theodore the Studite, Joseph the Hymnographer and Clement, their individual contributions can be extracted with certainty from the composite Triodia manuscripts. The shorter and anonymous hymns vary so much that tracing them from one manuscript to another seems almost impossible. However when the musical element is added to the text, we have yet another distinguishing element that may help to classify this material.

The work of Strunk and Follieri deals with the *Sticherarion* (collection of shorter hymns) Vatopedi 1488, and draws attention to the process of abbreviation that was taking place in this type of liturgical book from the early years of the eleventh century. Strunk has discussed this process

elsewhere and given the final form that the *Sticherarion* was to take the name "standard abridged version".[38] Strunk's attention in fact, was drawn to Vatopedi 1488 because its content seemed to pre-date this process of abridging and it is what he calls an "abnormal type of Triodion" in that it contains a substantial number of more or less unfamiliar items, many of which are otherwise only encountered in the earliest (therefore notationless) sources.[39] To these items Strunk gave the name *Sticherà apocrypha*.[40] According to Strunk this term *apocrypha* is already found in marginal notes in a tenth century Heirmologion Patmos 55,[41] but that it is not until the twelfth century that such a term is found in *Sticheraria*. Unfortunately Strunk did not seem to know the work of Karabinov, and for this reason it is very difficult to give an exact weight to his judgement on the typicality or non-typicality of any given musical manuscript. He states somewhat blandly that after an examination of the Palaeoslavonic Triodion manuscript, Chilandari 307: "Only too evidently some part of our manuscript's (Vatopedi 1488) apocryphal repertory was in earlier times more widely known than might first have been suspected."[42]

To prove this point he singles out one of the troparia from the foot-washing ceremony on Holy Thursday and notes its presence both in Vat. 771 and Sin. 734–735 as well as in the so-called Typikon of the Anastasis of 1122.[43] As I have already pointed out, Sin. 734–735 has over 200 "apocrypha" and a brief examination of Vat. 771 and Crypt. D.b.1 would suggest that they also contain a similar number. Some of these are common to all three, some to two, and others found only in one manuscript. The sheer bulk of this "apocryphal" material therefore, lessens somewhat any conclusions drawn by Strunk on the basis of only one hymn! Although Strunk's work is limited to a study of those hymns that have their own unique melody, namely idiomela, and therefore he does not take into consideration the vast majority of unedited hymns that are not sung to original music, the process that his research has uncovered is still of great value.

---

38 O. STRUNK, *Specimena notationum antiquorum*, Pars Suppletoria, Monumenta musicae byzantinae 7, Copenhagen 1965–66, pp. 16, 23–25; idem, "The Notation of the Chartes Fragment." *Annales musicologiques* III, 1955, pp. 34–35, reprinted in STRUNK, *Essays on Music*, pp. 107–108.

39 FOLLIERI & STRUNK, *Triodium*, p. 26.

40 FOLLIERI & STRUNK, *Triodium*, pp. 28–34.

41 FOLLIERI & STRUNK, *Triodium*, p. 29.

42 FOLLIERI & STRUNK, *Triodium*, p. 32.

43 FOLLIERI & STRUNK, *Triodium*, pp. 32–33.

Notwithstanding some of the limitations of Strunk's findings, the observations that he makes on the types of musical notation used by the scribe of Vatopedi 1488 permit us to gain an insight into the process of abbreviation that was taking place in the Byzantine liturgy as a whole. It is usual to divide early or Palaeo-Byzantine notation into two types, the Chartres notation in use at Mt. Athos and Constantinople up to the eleventh century, and the Coislin notation, originally Palestinian, probably from the monastery of St. Sabba, and in use up to the late twelfth century.[44] Shortly before 1220 the Coislin notation developed into Middle Byzantine notation which with some simplification and modification became the notation still in Church use today. The mixture of the Chartres and Coislin notations in the one manuscript such as Vatopedi 1488 and the fact that 118 of the 131 *apocryphal sticherà* are given in the older Chartres notation would seem to suggest that under pressure emerging from Palestine, possibly in the combined form of the Coislin notation and the Neo-Sabbite Typikon, much of the unique Constantinopolitan elements of the Triodion manuscript tradition disappeared. Such an hypothesis can only be validated with a more in-depth study of a greater number of a variety of liturgical books.

It would seem that our knowledge of the forces that shaped the Triodion of today has advanced little from the rather fanciful history that "Xanthopoulos" provided for the *Synaxaria* in the fourteenth century. Nevertheless with the growing perception that the Byzantine world was a complex and multi-dimensional reality of political, social, religious and artistic elements, it is to be hoped that this long neglected product of this world, that is the Lenten Triodion, will be subjected to the extensive and rigorous research that it merits and that it will so richly repay.

---

44 STRUNK, "Notation," pp. 107–108.

MANUSCRIPTS AND SOURCES: 5

THE TRANSLATION OF THE *TARGUM OF PSALMS*: A REPORT

Max Wilcox / Macquarie University

The translation of *The Targum of Psalms* is part of the wider project, *The Aramaic Bible*, being published by Michael Glazier and Liturgical Press, under the General Editorship of Martin McNamara. Because of the sheer size of the Psalms targum it will occupy a volume of its own. The project involves a detailed critical introduction, a complete translation into English with a select apparatus, and notes. It is hoped that it will appear during 1995.

Two major problems confront the translator of the *Targum of Psalms*. First, there is no critical text available. The edition of Paul de Lagarde claims to be taken from the text as found in the First *Biblica Rabbinica*, edited by Felix Pratensis for Daniel Bomberg, Venice 1516–17. but corrected in the case of Psalms at some 508 points. Hc is, however, rather coy about the sources for his corrections.[1] The one manuscript, which he did not in fact identify in his work, but which appears to coincide with his resultant text with almost monotonous regularity, is Munich MS. Solg. 6.2° [formerly at Nuremberg].[2] The second problem is that, apart from Latin translations made during the Renaissance, there are no models to follow or even to correct. A further complication is that the Latin translators do not seem to have realised that the Targum existed in several differing forms, and when they made their translations, they did so on the basis of whichever manuscript they themselves happened to have to hand. In fact, some would-be translators, apparently assuming that there was only one text of the Targum, seem to have "borrowed" or perhaps otherwise obtained translations from other scholars and fallen unwittingly into a trap all too familiar to those of us who have to mark students' essays: the resultant translations "leave untranslated those things which they ought to have translated and translate those things which they ought not to have translated".[3] What makes this so intriguing is that the existence of variant traditions of the Targum text was clearly known to whoever produced the Aramaic manuscripts themselves: for many of them

---

1 He uses the symbols M [Montanus], B [Bomberg] and N [Nebiensis]. M may refer to the Antwerp polyglot (the *Biblia Regia* of Arias Montano).

2 *Hagiographa Chaldaice*, Leipzig 1873, repr. Osnabrück 1967, pp. 2–85.

3 Apologies to the BCP 1662.

actually preserve readings which vary from their own main text, either incorporating them into their text with a marker such as *t''* [*trgwm 'ḥr*] "another targum" or *n''* [*nsḥ'ḥr*], "another MS.", or present them in marginalia, similarly suitably marked. How scholars missed these details one had better not speculate.

It happens, however, that the Latin translators, by their short-cuts, have actually given us additional evidence of the existence of alternative text-forms and that is a real bonus. Indeed, it is quite fundamental in attempting to make sense of the text of the *Targum of Psalms* that we start out with the right working assumptions, and first among these is that there may in fact be no one single autograph from which all other manuscripts are descended: the process may have been very much more complicated. We have already argued in this direction in a previous paper in 1985.[4] Again, we cannot assume in advance that any single manuscript will be homogeneous: it may represent a mixed text, or have been subject to some other kind of influence.

There are in fact some 18 Aramaic manuscripts known to the present writer and in addition we have two Polyglot Bible texts, those of the Antwerp and London polyglots.[5] We also have an edition of one manuscript, Villa-Amil. 5, from Madrid, with a Latin translation by Alfonso de Zamora, edited with detailed studies and notes by Luis Diez Merino.[6]

The aim of this translation is to present an English version of the Targum, derived from a critical text based on those 18 Aramaic manuscripts, which does not seek to harmonise variant forms, but where these affect more than orthography and dialect, to give them in full. English readers will then have materials at their disposal to enable them to appreciate the different traditions of text and interpretation which appear in the several blocks of manuscripts. The present writer has no intention of creating yet another pseudo-Targum.

Our first step then is to put together the critical data. In practice what we have done is to use the Lagarde edition as a point of reference and note all

---

4 "The Aramaic Targum to Psalms," *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies*. Division A: The Period of the Bible, Jerusalem 1986, pp. 143–150, especially the summary at 149–150.

5 B. Arias MONTANO, *Biblia Sacra hebraice, chaldaice, graece et latine Philippi II Regis Catholici pietate et studio ad sacrosanctae Ecclesiae usum*, Antwerp, 1571 (the so-called *Biblia Regia*); Brian WALTON, *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, London 1657. There are indications that several more MSS. may be involved, but that has to be re-checked.

6 *Targum de Salmos. Edicion Principe del Ms. Villa-Amil n. 5 de Alfonso de Zamora*, Bibliotheca Hispana Biblica 5, Madrid 1982.

readings which vary from it. Analysing these data we find that the manuscript traditions group themselves broadly into three main streams:

(a) Lagarde: Solg. 6.2°;
(b) Villa-Amil. 5: Jews College 7, Cambridge Ee5.9, [Paris BN ms. hébr. 110];
(c) Paris BN ms. hébr. 17, 114.

There is also the further complication that the Targum tradition of Psalms shows quite a notable kinship at certain places with the Syriac Peshitta version.

As an example of this, there is the well-known case of Ps 67(68): 18(19), cited in Eph 4: 8 in a form agreeing with the interpretation of the Targum against both the Hebrew Masoretic text and the LXX. The latter read, "Thou didst ascend on high, thou didst lead a host of captives, thou didst receive gifts for men". Ephesians 4: 8 reads: "He ascended on high, he led a host of captives, he gave gifts to men." One might think this variation merely a stylistic change by the author of Ephesians were it not for the fact that the Targum reads also: "... thou didst give gifts to the sons of men" (translating literally). However, this reading also appears in three other textual traditions which do not appear to depend upon Ephesians. They are Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem* 5: 8 (= CSEL 47, 598), Justin, *Dialogue* 87 and the Peshitta Syriac version of Ps 68: 19. Tertullian's "dona dedit filiis hominum" is striking in the literalness of its version of the Aramaic (or Syriac). Moreover, he goes on to interpret it very intricately: "*eleganter* 'filiis hominum', ait non passim 'hominibus', nos ostendens filios hominum, id est uere hominum, apostolorum." Justin has two forms of Ps 68: 19, both in agreement with the Targum and Peshitta against the Hebrew and the LXX. However, whereas the form of words in *Dialogue* 39 might have been a quotation from or allusion to Eph 4: 8, that in *Dialogue* 87 cannot be: it is the full form as in Tertullian and agrees precisely with the Targum and the Syriac even against Eph 4: 8, in regard to the phrase "to the sons of men". The agreement with the Syriac is very interesting in its own right: it is one more pointer to a possible link between the texts preserved in the Syriac and some at least of the Targumim, and, accordingly, a hint of the closeness of the historical relationship between Jews and Syriac-speaking Christians in the period up to the Fifth Century C.E. when the Peshitta emerged. The

presence of the variant reading in Ephesians and the two patristic sources indicates the great antiquity of the tradition.[7]

It will therefore be necessary to present the rival texts in up to three columns so as to give a fair picture of the textual situation.

But is there no way of "resolving" this problem? The "problem" should probably be stated somewhat differently. How might such a situation have arisen? By deviation from one single authoritative "parent"? By several streams gradually being revised and edited to match one another and perhaps the Hebrew text of Psalms increasingly closely? By the progressive loss of still more divergent groups?

In a way it is not a greatly new problem in Targumic studies. Already in the so-called Palestinian Pentateuch Targumim we have a similar range of variant traditions — if anything with the deviations at certain points far wider than is mostly the case with Psalms. For example, we have Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (BL Add. Ms. 27031) which contains a good many sizeable blocks of haggadic material explaining such things as the Judah-Tamar incident in Gen 38: 25–26. Then there is the group of manuscripts usually termed collectively the "Fragment Targumim",[8] which exist basically in their haggadic portions and were preserved almost as marginalia or addenda to Targum Onkelos. Next, we have Codex Neofiti I, which contains a full Pentateuch in a "Palestinian" form, plus marginalia and interlinear texts which clearly preserve other "Fragment-targum" type material.[9] On top of that we have the texts from the Gairo Geniza, published by Paul Kahle, which also present a "Palestinian" type text,[10] and a number of other smaller pieces of "additional" targumim preserved in a number of MSS. and early printed editions.

---

7 See the detailed treatment of this in WILCOX, "Aramaic Targum," pp. 144–145.

8 Paris 110, Vat 440, Nur Solg. 2.2°, Leipzig BH1. M.L. Klein has added four more MSS. to this list: MS Jewish Theological Seminary (Lutzki) 605 (= E. N. Adler 2587), fols. 6, 7; MS British Library Or. 10794, fol. 8; MS Moscow - Günzburg 3 (which Klein notes as copied from MS Nürnberg Solg. 2.2°); and MS Sassoon 264, fols. 225–267 (copied, so Klein, from the second *Biblica Rabbinica*, Jacob ben HAYYIM (ed.), Venice 1524–25, reprinted Jerusalem 1972). See further, KLEIN, *The Fragment-Targums to the Pentateuch according the their Extant Sources*, Analecta Biblica 76, 2 vols., Rome 1980, esp. 1: 7.

9 Edited by A. Diez MACHO, *Neofiti I: Targum Palestinse MS de la Biblioteca Vaticana*, 5 vols., Madrid-Barcelona 1968–78.

10 In *Masoreten des Westens II.*, Stuttgart 1930, reprinted Hildesheim 1967.

What do we do here? Say that Targum Onkelos is the base, upon which all of these have built or upon which they have commented or embroidered? It won't work. Apart from anything else, Targum Onkelos itself, for all the talk of its literalness, is not literal in its representation of the Hebrew original. Moreover, it itself contains at certain points "Palestinian" elements. Is it, then, not the pristine Targum some have thought it to be, but perhaps after all yet another Palestinian-type Targum, which has been rather severely redacted to bring it into some greater degree of conformity with the Hebrew text? Or what? Perhaps it is time that we put Occam's razor away and began with an empirical study of the matter. Perhaps there have always been mutually variant traditions of interpretation of Scripture and perhaps the various streams of Targumic textual tradition really reflect this. Obviously, since they all purport to interpret for us their respective books of the Hebrew Bible, they must have a common link *in that text*: they do, after all, follow its verses in proper sequence. It is just what they make of them that causes problems. For a quite striking example from Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, we may cite Deut 6: 5 —

> Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with the two impulses of thine heart, and even if he take thy life from thee and with all thy mammon.

Here a traditional Jewish interpretation of this verse, preserved for us also in the Mishnah, in m.Ber. 9: 5, has been taken right into the very text: the Hebrew text is not translated literally at all, but represented at this point by its now traditional "meaning".

It is suggested that something like that has also occurred in the Psalms targumic streams, with perhaps differing traditional interests stressing differing interpretative traditions. If so, to attempt to iron out the "deviations" in the search for a hypothetical underlying unity would be no service to scholarship. Accordingly, in this translation it is intended to present the reader with the full data of the puzzle and also with some possible keys to its solution — a solution not in terms of sheer-cussedness, scribal disarray or the like, but in terms of preservation of precious information about how the text of Psalms was interpreted in differing groups over the course of the centuries. Finally, this will serve to reinforce in our minds the real ability of Jewish thought and scholarship not only to tolerate difference of opinion and indeed paradox, but to find in and through that very paradox paths to the hidden mind of God which represent a dynamic, on-going dialogue between scholars and their Maker. Set dogma in Judaism might well suggest not a living God but a fossilised one.

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS CONTINUITY: 1

CONSENSUS AND DISSENSUS ON PUBLIC SPECTACLES IN EARLY BYZANTIUM

Richard Lim / Smith College, Mass.

Among the canons of the Council in Trullo in 691–92 are prohibitions of spectacles such as the mime shows and *venationes*, wild beast hunts. Canon sixty-two specifically forbids the celebration of various festivals: the Brumalia, the Bota, the Kalends and the first day of March.[1] Such ecclesiastical rulings have been read by some scholars as attempts to stamp out the remnants of pagan, Graeco-Roman culture and, as such, appear emblematic of the reactions of an embattled Christian society to the Islamic conquest and Slavic migrations.[2] The question that arises is whether the firm stance on spectacles articulated in the canons represents a change in the pattern of accommodation between things Christian and things "secular" in early Byzantium as a result of the seventh-century crises.

This paper treats some of these issues in respect to the preceding period, in particular, the tensions between the broad consensus among late antique and early Byzantine Christians (especially the secular notables and the imperial court) that the traditional spectacles were indispensable, and a vocal dissensual view advocated by other Christians who opposed the *spectacula* with a variety of given reasons, including charges of pagan idolatry. In examining the relationship between the two — i.e., the consensual and the dissensual attitudes towards the spectacles — I suggest that the contentions and negotiations over the character of public life from the late fourth to the sixth centuries should be seen not only from the point of view of "christianisation", or even "secularisation", but also, more concretely, from that of "imperialisation".

I. *Pre-Constantinian Christian Rhetoric against the Spectacula*

The fact that their scriptures do not explicitly forbid Christians from attending public games or spectacles represents a gross negligence which

---

1 For a discussion of the historical implications of some of these canons, see F. TROMBLEY, "The Council in Trullo, (691–692): A Study of the Canons relating to Paganism, Heresy and the Invasions," *Comitatus* 9, 1978, pp. 1–18.

2 See E.W. BROOKS, "The Successors of Heraclius to 717," *Cambridge Medieval History*, II, New York 1913, pp. 407–408.

certain later Christians would do their utmost to make good. The third-century Tertullian was one such motivated crusader. In his *De spectaculis*, a writing which was translated into Greek as well, he responded to literary interlocutors conjured up to ask where in the bible could one find prohibitions against the spectacles.[3] Having set himself up to throw a counter-punch, Tertullian, citing antiquarian lore from Varro and Suetonius, laboured to create a rhetorical edifice that would demonstrate why attendance at the spectacles was equivalent to indulgence in pagan idolatry: he pointed to the iconography of the shows' accoutrements, the rituals that often included processions and sacrifice, and the mythological origins of the *ludi* as reasons why they were held in honour of pagan *daimones*.

Other Christians would join in the chorus to rehearse their anti-games rhetoric.[4] According to their prescriptions, the traditional *spectacula* stood in opposition to the *spectacula Christianorum*, namely the martyrdoms of heroic men and women who were condemned *ad bestias* to die a painful death in Roman arenas. In this light, a determined boycott of the games was only fitting to and appropriate for persecuted Christians. Notice here that the Christians were vituperating against a public culture that was fundamentally and emphatically not *theirs* — not because the spectacles were thought antithetical to Christian values, but because, before Constantine, the sponsorship of such shows as a gesture of benefaction belonged exclusively to the non-Christian civic and imperial élites. Thus their very marginality in this period permitted Christians to adopt a degree of "philosophical" detachment, even to mobilise traditional philosophical *topoi* to brand the spectacles as sources of moral turpitude and impure pollution.

II. *Public Spectacles in a Christianising Empire*

After the recognition of Christianity by Constantine, the status of the spectacles became an issue of contention, while the lack of Christian consensus already suggested by Tertullian's intra-Christian debate was not helped by the fact that an increasing number of the *euergetai*, from emperors down, were themselves Christians. These far-from-marginal players were

---

3 Text and commentary in M. TURCAN (ed.), *Tertullien. Les spectacles (De spectaculis)*, SC 332, Paris 1986. For its western reception, see W. WEISMANN, *Kirche und Schauspiele. Die Schauspiele im Urteil der lateinischen Kirchenväter unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Augustin*, Würzburg 1972; for its eastern audience, see G. SCHÖLLGEN, "Der Adressatenkreis der griechischen Schauspielschrift Tertullians," *JbAChr* 25, 1982, pp. 22–27.

4 For example, LACTANTIUS, *Divinae institutiones*, VI, 20; *Epitom.* 58.

confronted with the task of sorting out the implications of the pre-Constantinian anti-games paradigm.

With the exception of the gladiatorial games which Constantine marked out for prohibition in 325, the role of the traditional spectacles was largely undisturbed by the rise of imperial Christianity.[5] Yet even the gladiatorial *munera* survived, despite the recurring charge of *crudelitas amphitheatri*.[6] Thus, while the anti-games tradition continued to thrive after Constantine, mostly within ascetic and monastic circles, there was no discernible effort by those in power to eliminate the offensive *spectacula*. If anything, the haphazard and generally unsuccessful attempts by some to oppose the spectacles with canonical rulings and requests for imperial rescripts suggest the absence of an unified Christian view on the matter. This tug-of-war between the consensual acceptance of the games and a shrill dissenting voice opposing this easy accommodation can be followed by perusing books two (*de feriis*) and fifteen (*de spectaculis*) of the *Theodosian Code* where successive laws sought to define the role of spectacles in public life.

Faced with the anti-games protestations from what was clearly a minority, though a vociferous one, Christian notables and emperors were largely able to redefine the spectacles as "secular", as necessary and conducive to the public good, and thus acceptable. This understanding became so firmly established that a law of 346 confers on pagan temples immunity from destruction by citing their association with popular spectacles and festivals: "For since certain plays or spectacles of the circus or contests derive their origin from some of these, such structures shall not be torn down, since from them is provided the regular performance of long-established amusements for the Roman people."[7] Interestingly, the rhetorical trope originally used to oppose the spectacles by connecting them with pagan worship was drawn upon to argue a diametrically opposite position.

The fourth-century solution to the problems posed by the rise of Christianity and the survival of this polemical tradition against spectacles was nothing short of the division of time and space into discrete compartments: Christian, pagan and secular. Yet, the sanctification of

---

5 *Codex Theod.* XV, 12, 1. See G. VILLE, "Les jeux gladiateurs dans l'empire chrétien," *MEFR* 72, 1960, pp. 273–334, and R. MACMULLEN, "What Difference did Christianity Make?," *Historia* 35, 1986, pp. 322–343. For theories about its demise, see idem, "Religion et politique: comment ont pris fins les combats de gladiateurs," *Annales* 34, 1979, pp. 651–671.

6 AUGUSTINE, *Confessiones*, VI, 13.

7 *Codex Theod.* XVI, 10, 3; trans. C. PHARR (ed.), *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions*, Princeton 1952, p. 472.

Christian time required imperial aid, for few Christian events possessed the necessary draw to bring about the changes on their own. But since even very Christian emperors had also their own interests to consider, this process entailed a complex negotiation.[8]

A number of scholars have suggested that this debate over spectacles served to reaffirm the civic order and to establish a neutral *saeculum*.[9] This position is eloquently argued by Robert Markus in his recent *The End of Ancient Christianity*, in which he posits a fundamental parting of the ways between the Greek east and the Latin west regarding their reception of traditional festivals and spectacles. With the notable exception of St. Augustine, Markus proposes, Latin Christians acknowledged a bifurcation of the world into a part that was Christian and another that was pagan.[10] The Greek east, however, lent itself to a tripartite division: into parts that were Christian, pagan and secular. Markus concludes his perspicuous chapter with these words: "Greek Christianity was, somehow, less hospitable to sharp discontinuities which cut across the texture of Christian existence."[11] One important reason for this difference, one may venture to add, is the continued presence of a strong imperial court in the east.

III. *The Failure of Secularisation in the Sixth Century?*

From the mid-fifth century onwards, after the *Theodosian Code* falls silent, the history of the spectacles, and the imperial attitude towards them,

---

8 In 389, an imperial edict was given at Constantinople to Proculus, the urban prefect, commanding that no circus races be held on Sunday so that "no concourse of people to the spectacles may divert men from the reverend mysteries of the Christian law" (*Codex Theod.* II, 8, 20; trans. PHARR, p. 44). In 399, an elaboration of this theme is to be found in an edict of Arcadius and Honorius to Rome's *praefectus urbi*: "On the Lord's day, to which the name was given out of the very reverence for it, neither theatrical plays nor contests of horses nor any spectacles which were devised to effeminate the spirit shall be celebrated in any municipality" (*Codex Theod.* II, 8, 23; PHARR, p. 45). This privileged status for Sundays was later on extended to include the Paschal days, Christmas and Epiphany (cf. *Codex Theod.* II, 8, 24). This "affirmative action" for Christian holy days was reiterated in a law of Honorius and Theodosius in 409 (*Codex Theod.* II, 8, 25) stipulating that the previously-exempt Kalends celebrations and imperial anniversaries — when they fell on Sundays -- were also to be covered by the ban.

9 On the emerging importance of Sundays, see H. DUMAINE, "Dimanche," *DACL*, IV, 1920, p. 948.

10 R.A. MARKUS, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, Cambridge 1991, p. 134.

11 Ibid., p. 135.

become much more difficult to gauge. In the sixth century, a number of imperial acts appear to threaten the tripartite division cited above, as emperors banned specific forms of public spectacles after more than a century of accommodation. Anastasius is said to have closed the shows of the mimes and joined a roster of emperors who unsuccessfully tried to stop the Maiuma, a Syrian festival traditionally associated with excesses and orgies.[12] In 499, he also banned wild beast hunts. Following Anastasius' reign, Justin and Justinian put an end to the Olympic games of Antioch in 520. The cumulative impression of these acts suggests that, by the early sixth century, there was a shift in the imperial attitude towards public spectacles. Was this the case and if so why? Did this mark a collapse of secularisation and the triumph of christianisation? Are we witnessing an emerging Christian consensus on spectacles? I propose to focus on the last two instances, leaving aside the banning of the mime as it may be seen as a recurring motif in Roman imperial politics.[13]

First of all, I should like to affirm that imperial bans on spectacles were not in and of themselves novel practices. Emperors, both pagan and Christian, employed such measures to punish the inhabitants of particular misbehaving cities (for example, where there occurred rioting) and to deter others from similar misconducts. While such sanctions were thought to constitute grievous punishments and were frequently accompanied by a demotion of municipal status, they also tended to be temporary. Restoration

---

12 See A.H.M. JONES *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602*, II, Oxford 1964, pp. 977-978.

13 Mime actors long existed in an uneasy tension with emperors: some were not averse to jeering them in performances while others received special favours from them, see A. CAMERON, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Byzantium*, Oxford 1976, pp. 157--192. On their association with rioting, see E.J. JORY, "The Early Pantomime Riots," in A. MOFFAT (ed.), *Maistor. Classical, Byzantine & Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*, Canberra 1984, pp. 57–66. Anastasius ordered an end to the theatre of the mimes at an unspecified time: see JOSHUA the STYLITE, *Chronicon*, 46 and PROCOPIUS, *Panegyricus in Anastasium*, 15–16. Procopius represents the emperor's action as motivated by disgust at the actors' effeminate degeneracy. Their cross-dressing clearly violated representations of gender boundaries and proper decorum, and as such served as a source of moral corruption for the general populace. Anastasius' effort resulted in nothing less than the salvation of the cities: "αἱ πόλεις ἐσώζοντο" (*Panegyricus in Anastasium*, 15; CSHB, p. 507). But unlike Anastasius' prohibition of the *venationes*, his ban of the mimes was not long-standing, for the mime theatre returned soon after his reign if not already during it; see JUSTINIAN, *Novellae*, CV, 1, 536 ("*de consulibus*"); *Codex Iustinianus*, XI, 41, 5.

of civic amenities to the *status quo ante* could be expected for good behaviour, especially if an important city was involved. A test case came about during the Riot of the Statues in Antioch in 387. After the Antiochenes violated the imperial images and statues in protest of higher taxation, the inhabitants faced the grim prospect of severe imperial retribution.[14] While Theodosius I deliberated on the exact measure to be taken — would he massacre the inhabitants? — the public baths, the theatres and the hippodrome in the city were ordered shut.[15] During this uncertain time, the priest John Chrysostom sought to console his congregation, but did not hide his gloating over the fact that the spectacles that had competed with his services for attendance were no more, at least for a time. When the spectacles and games returned to business after the formal rehabilitation of the city,[16] many rejoiced, but at least one Antiochene was disappointed.

In sum, in late antiquity, the tactic of banning spectacles was used by emperors to punish cities for factional violence, while the imperial opposition against the mime theatre based on moral or political prerogatives could trace a longer history. I would now like to examine two particular episodes — the closing of the *venationes* and the Olympic games of Antioch — too see whether they represent anomalous cases of imperial intervention in the public culture of games and spectacles.

(a) Banning of venationes

The emperor Anastasius was credited by panegyrists with having banned the *venationes* in 499.[17] On first sight, this move to end a long-established form of urban entertainment constituted a drastic turn-about, the more so since the *venatio* was a spectacle which, increasingly after the decline of gladiatorial *munera*, came to characterise the essence of what went on in amphitheatres throughout the empire. Late antique mosaic depictions from

---

14 LIBANIUS, *Or.* XX, 6; John CHRYSOSTOM, *Homiliae ad populum Antiochenum de statuis*, XIV, 6 and XVII, 2.

15 LIBANIUS, *Or.* XX, 6; CHRYSOSTOM, *Homiliae de statuis*, XV, 1; XVIII: Antioch's metropolitan status went to Laodicea, 9–14.

16 LIBANIUS, *Or.* XX.

17 According to JOSHUA the STYLITE, *Chronicon*, 34; WRIGHT (ed.), p. 23: "In the month of Âb (August) of this year [499] there came an edict from the emperor Anastasius that the fights of the wild beasts in the amphitheatre (κυνήγιον) should be suppressed in all the cities of the Greek empire."

every corner of the *imperium*, from Yakto (Daphne) and Apamea in Syria to Tunisia, celebrated the Romans' abiding love of the wild beast hunt.[18]

Two contemporary panegyrists, Priscian of Caesarea and Procopius of Gaza, praised Anastasius for his decision to end the popular *venationes*.[19] In their highly formalised rhetorical set-pieces, the motivation for the emperor's ban was attributed to the inhumanity of the arena where people were mangled and killed by wild beasts. It is possible that Anastasius' ban was not against the *venatio per se*, but against its use as a means for executing prisoners and convicts. This conjecture rests on the interpretation of Procopius' use of the phrase ἀνδρὲς δυστυχεῖς — were these convicted *damnati* or simply ill-starred *venatores* or *bestiarii* who succumbed to the hazards of their trade?

Some may expect to find the objections against *venationes* to follow from the Christian arguments against the gladiatorial games (which were last attested in the mid-fifth century), one of which was that it was improper for human beings bearing the likeness of God to be slaughtered by lesser creatures for the pleasure of others. But we need not deduce that the suppression of the beast hunts was linked to a larger programme to reform public life according to Christian mores. A more compelling reason may be found in the exacting and sometimes ruinous expenditures involved in fielding such shows, for the *venatio* was an extremely expensive kind of spectacle to stage.[20] The high valuation of the *venatio* as a showcase for an exotic wild kingdom placed a high premium on the search, capture and transport of rare animals from all corners of the empire and beyond to delight crowds in Roman cities.[21] Symmachus the elder, the Roman senator, revealed in vivid detail the exhaustive work and prohibitive expenditures that went into the preparations for such shows. The popular *venationes*, with in-built inflationary tendencies due to the need to surpass previous performances, placed an inordinate burden on the provincial *curiales* who were

---

18 See J. LASSUS, "La mosaïque de Yakto," in G.W. ELDERKIN (ed.), *Antioch on the Orontes*, Princeton 1934, I, pp. 114–156; A. BESCHAOUCH, "La mosaïque de chasse à l'amphithéâtre découverte à Smirat en Tunisie," *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, Paris 1966, pp. 134–157; K. DUNBABIN, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa. Studies in Iconography and Patronage*, Oxford 1978.

19 PRISCIAN of CAESAREA, *Panegyricus in imperatorem Anastasium*, 223–227 (edd. BEKKER & NIEBUHR, CSHB, p. 524). Procopius echoes such sentiments in his *Panegyricus in Anastasium*, 15–16 (edd. BEKKER & NIEBUHR, CSHB, pp. 506–507).

20 See, for example, *SEG* XIV, 386.

21 LIBANIUS, *Epp*. 217–219, 544, 586–588, 598–599, 1231–1232, 1399–1400.

expected to finance them. Even the rich Symmachus needed to amass his substance over the years in order to provide for his son's praetorian games. Aristocratic pride and status-spending knew no limits, but such behaviour was contingent upon a public that welcomed and demanded particular forms of displays, and upon emperors who rewarded local notables' lavish expenditures with high offices. The eventual ruin of many of these notables, who formed the backbone of the empire, could only be averted by a categorical ban of the most expensive varieties of public spectacles.[22] In short, the emperor would be saving the notables from themselves and, in the process, would also secure the larger welfare of the cities.

The obvious alternative to this was to shift the high costs of the games in all the cities to the imperial fisc. Yet this was clearly not an attractive option to the emperor, especially one as frugal as Anastasius, though it had been necessary in some instances. I argue therefore that the economic motive is of considerable importance in estimating the motivations for the emperor's ban, especially considering the fiscal conservatism of Anastasius, who at the end of his reign left Justin with a treasury flushed with 320,000 centenaria of gold.[23] A direct correlation between official attitudes towards public entertainment and spending explains why neither Anastasius' ban on the *venationes* nor his accumulated capital long survived his reign: under Justin and Justinian, open-fisted munificence and spectacular displays abounded, and *venationes* came back into fashion.[24]

(b) The Olympic Games of Antioch

Now to another change, this one more permanent. In 520, during the reigns of Justin and Justinian,[25] the Olympic games of Antioch were

---

22 In addition, the exhibition of exotic animals originally served to advertise a universal empire to its own citizenry by bringing the wild, the untamed, the unhuman from the peripheries to the centre so that they might be slaughtered in full view of the victorious people; see K. HOPKINS, "Murderous Games," in *Death and Renewal*, Sociological Studies in Roman History 2, Cambridge 1983, pp. 93–100. By 499, the empire was not quite as extensive anymore and a shrunken empire could no longer field costly expeditions to obtain a constant supply of wild animals for the *venationes*.

23 A. VASILIEV, *Justin the First. An Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great*, Cambridge Mass. 1950, p. 375.

24 See JUSTINIAN, *Novellae*, XV, 1, 536 (cited in JONES, *Later Roman Empire*, II, p. 1398 n. 87). The *venationes* were officially condemned in canon 51 of the Council in Trullo.

25 The Greek text of MALALAS, *Chronographia*, XVII, 140 (CSHB, p. 417), attributing this action to ὁ αὐτὸς βασιλεύς, clearly suggests that Justinian

abolished during an Olympic year, in the 325th Olympiad.[26] Ever since the reign of Claudius, according to Malalas, Antiochenes had celebrated their own Olympic games in the pleasantly-wooded suburb of Daphne once every four years during July and August.[27] This was a singularly important agonistic festival for the Greek east and for Syria in particular. In Libanius' time it drew competitors from all throughout the eastern Mediterranean.[28] John Malalas' description in book twelve suggests that the games were still remembered in the sixth century as having a markedly cosmopolitan flavour.

Why were they ended in 520? I have found in the scholarship four main explanations: (I) the relationship of the games to faction riots (Vasiliev); (II) the decline of the athletic ideal in education and interest in agonistic festivals (Liebeschuetz); (III) the association of the games with paganism; and (IV) the exorbitant costs of the games (Downey).

(i) The relationship of the Olympic games to factional riots

In his work, *Justin the First*, Vasiliev argues that, "The Olympic games in Antioch were suppressed ... because the government was determined to put an end to the excesses of the factions. Following the same policy, the government prohibited other spectacles in the eastern regions of the empire and sent into exile from the east all the dancers who appeared in them".[29] His case is built up carefully with reference to the sources, mostly Malalas.

---

was the author of the change as he was the last emperor previously named. The Slavonic Malalas indicates Justin I as the one responsible instead, but this is likely to be a mistaken interpretation stemming from the reliance on conventional dates of imperial reigns.

26 VASILIEV, *Justin*, p. 119; G. DOWNEY, "The Olympic Games of Antioch in the Fourth Century A.D.," *TAPA* 70, 1939, p. 428.

27 The traditional Olympic games held in Elis ended in 393; see CEDRENUS, *Hist. Compendium*, 323D. But in contrast to the Peloponnese, Syria represented a much more important region. Olympic games were attested in both Antioch (Daphne) and in nearby Apamea well into the late antique period. The best general accounts of the Antiochene games in the fourth century are: G. von STAUFFENBERG, *Die römische Kaisergeschichte bei Malalas*, Stuttgart 1931, pp. 412–433; DOWNEY, "The Olympic Games of Antioch," pp. 428–438; P. PETIT, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IVe siècle après J.-C.*, Paris 1955, pp. 122–136; J.H.W.G. LIEBESCHUETZ, "The Syriarch in the Fourth Century," *Historia* 8, 1959, pp. 113–126, and idem, *Antioch. City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1972, pp. 136–144.

28 LIBANIUS, *Epp.* 843, 1179–1183, 1278–1279.

29 VASILIEV, *Justin*, p. 119.

He points out that, according to Malalas, in 519 — a year previous to the abolition of the games — the Blues caused disturbances all throughout the cities of the empire. The disorder was particularly severe in Antioch where private individuals and imperial magistrates were assaulted and pelted with stones, even killed. The newly-installed Ephraemius, bishop of Antioch, was said to have taken successful measures against the Blues.

Thus, in Vasiliev's view, the closing of the games was in part punishment for, and in part prevention of, the factional violence besetting many eastern cities. This is an attractive thesis in that emperors were known to have punished misbehaving cities by shutting down their spectacles.[30] On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that the factions were especially involved with the Olympic games. Why did the emperors not shut down the hippodrome and the theatres, the prime *loci* of factional violence, as previous emperors had done and as future emperors would continue to do in response to civil disorders? Furthermore, if the goal was to suppress the factions, would it not be more reasonable to target primarily the perennial culture surrounding the races at the hippodrome and the theatrical shows? What important, even symbolic, damage could be done to Daphne had happened already in 507 with the looting and burning down of the local synagogue (on the site of which a church was later constructed). In addition, why were the Olympic games shut down permanently, since in other instances when bans on spectacles were meted out by emperors as punishment, they served as temporary chastising measures? Finally, why was Antioch singled out for such punishment when it was not the only eastern city to be disrupted by factional rioting in 519?

(ii) The decline of the athletic ideal in education and interest in agonistic festivals

Another argument is suggested by Liebeschuetz, who — it should be said, is not addressing the closing of the games in 520 — argues that in the fourth century "the Olympic Games were already an anachronism" in part because of their association with Zeus, and also because athletic contests were no longer as important a part of Greek παιδεία as before.[31] Because of this, Liebeschuetz finds the survival of the games in Antioch until 520 itself a remarkable fact, an *explanandum*, and suggests that it is because of the "relative strength and persistence of the Hellenic tradition in the city".[32] It

---

30 See CAMERON, *Circus Factions*, pp. 271–296.
31 LIEBESCHUETZ, *Antioch*, pp. 139–140.
32 Ibid., p. 140.

should be pointed out that, regardless of the strength and weakness of the ideals of παιδεία, the Olympic games as a series of spectator events remained extremely popular in the fifth and sixth centuries, and Antioch was literally emptied when the games took place in Daphne.[33] In the final analysis, it was the spectators who counted for the most since emperors, given a fair choice, normally cared more for the enjoyment of their people than the enthusiasm or welfare of those who furnished the spectacles, a principle amply demonstrated by the restrictive laws on the social mobility of stage actors in late antiquity.

(iii) The association of the games with paganism

Liebeschuetz's suggestion brings me to a third theory. Is it likely that the games were closed by the emperors precisely because of their "Hellenic", or "pagan", association? Basil of Seleucia in Isauria (bishop 440) accused the games of being a festival of the demon and an insult to the Cross.[34] The association of particular festivals with "pagan superstition" is by no means original; it may even be considered a tired *topos* in the fifth century. The second charge, that deliberate insults were hurled at the crucifixion of Christ, recalls earlier observations that Christians were mocked in theatres. Yet these so accurately mirror Christian accusations that Jews were defiling the cross that they were likely aimed at persuading and goading into action an otherwise neutral public not convinced *a priori* that a festival sacred to Zeus was necessarily one in which Christ was insulted. More importantly, why should the work of a bishop from the fifth century suddenly direct imperial policy in the sixth? While Basil's work became influential in the imperial city through the borrowings by Romanus the Melode, it was the style of his *kontakia* that aroused interest. Even given this connexion, it is not easy to see why Basil's opposition to the Olympic games would suddenly gain ascendancy in the Constantinopolitan court.[35]

The games found in Severus of Antioch (c. 465–538) a more contemporary critic, yet the objections he gave in an eulogy of Athanasius of Alexandria were directed against Christians who went to Daphne to witness

---

33 See PALLADIUS, *Dialogus*, XVI, 33; LIEBESCHUETZ, *Antioch*, p. 138.

34 Basil of Seleuceia on the Olympic games: "a demonic festival wantonly insulting the cross", in *Basilii Seleuciensis oratio*, 27 (PG 85, 309); cited in VASILIEV, *Justin*, p. 119.

35 For the connexion between Basil of Seleucia in Isauria with Romanus the Melode, see P. MAAS, "Das Kontakion," *BZ* 19, 1910, pp. 285–306.

the games, not against the games themselves.[36] The crowds attending the Olympic games in the sixth century were Christian crowds, as demonstrated by the burning of the synagogue in 507.[37] In any case, as a vocal Monophysite, Severus' view on any given matter was not likely to curry favour or find support with the staunchly-Chalcedonian imperial élites in Constantinople since both the powerful Vitalian (*cos.* 520) and Justinian expressed a deep antipathy to the man.[38] John Malalas' unique and highly idiosyncratic description of the Olympic games in book twelve (*passim*) casts a favourable light on the virtue of the young male and female competitors; it contains no criticism, explicit or veiled, of the games' pagan association or moral depravity. There is in it no hint that the games served as a focus of anti-Christian feelings, as hinted at by Basil of Seleucia; instead, it shows that, in certain early Byzantine circles, the Olympic games continued to be held in high regard even after they were abolished.

We should not over-estimate the power of the lobby opposing spectacles, the more so because the debate cannot be cast neatly as a show-down between ecclesiastical and secular and/or imperial interests. In the 430s, when Leontius (urban prefect of Constantinople from 434-35) attempted to renew the Olympic games at the theatre of Chalcedon (a city much closer to Constantinople than Antioch), his plan was opposed by the abbot Hypatius and his monks. But when Hypatius approached Eulalius, bishop of Chalcedon, asking him to join in protest before the prefect, he was sharply told to mind his own business.[39] Clearly Christians did not speak with one voice on this issue, itself not a matter dividing "Church and State".

The cases discussed above suggest that we cannot easily attribute the official banning of the games to contemporary pressures from local Christian monastics or ecclesiastics to root out "paganism". Not all Christians harboured anti-games sentiments, before Constantine or after, and in any

---

36 SEVERUS of ANTIOCH, *Homiliae cathedrales*, 91 (*Patrologia Orientalis* XXV, pp. 25–27). In the speech dated to 516, Severus introduces Athanasius to his congregation as a prize athlete from Egypt.

37 The site was then turned into a martyrium of Leontius. A later church of the Archangel Michael later built there was destroyed by the Persians in 540 (PROCOPIUS, *Bell. Pers.* II, 11, 6ff) and subsequently rebuilt by Justinian (PROCOPIUS, *De aedificiis*, V, 9, 29).

38 On Vitalian's animosity towards Severus, see ZACHARIAH of MYTILENE, *Hist. eccl.* VIII, 2; EVAGRIUS, *Hist. eccl.* IV, 4; JOHN of NIKIU, *Chronicon*, XC, 8.

39 CALLINICUS, *Vita Hypatii*, XXXIII, 1–11 (= 107–109); cf. JONES, *Later Roman Empire*, II, p. 978.

event the élites need not have cared should they have chosen to ignore this dissensual voice.

(iv) A cost-cutting measure

Glanville Downey has suggested that the suppression of the Olympic games in 520 was "a measure of government economy which deprived the city of its most famous and most popular entertainments".[40] This is a view that Vasiliev refuses to accept. I argue that it actually has much merit but is insufficient as the sole explanation.[41]

The Olympic games, which in the fourth century at times included gladiatorial shows (last attested for the games in 328) and *venationes*, were extremely costly to produce. According to Malalas, the games were originally funded by a legacy which was later on incorporated into the public treasury of the city. Hosting the games became a curial liturgy in the few generations before Libanius. Taken together with the syriarchy, the two liturgies represented the greatest claim on the mandatory status-spending of the Antiochene aristocracy. Bankruptcy was a real prospect faced by those who had to assume the duty of alytarch in Libanius' time. In 364, the games constituted such a considerable financial burden that two men jointly produced them.[42] From 388-93, the money was raised by a special *collatio* from senators of Antioch, but this special levy was abolished after the downfall of Tatian, practorian prefect of the East, who instituted it in the first case.[43] After 465, according to a law of Zeno, the *comes orientis* and the *consularis Syriae* appropriated the functions of the alytarch (who was responsible for the Olympic games) and the Syriarch (who was responsible for other spectacles) respectively.[44] We know little about the financing of the games after this, but it is safe to infer from attested trends that continued or at least periodic infusions of state funds would be needed to keep the games going. The economic argument is all the more important in light of the figure of Marinus of Apamea, also called the Syrian, who became

---

40 G. DOWNEY, "Ephraemius, Patriarch of Antioch," *ChHist* 7, 1938, pp. 364–370, at 365.

41 See C. ROUECHÉ, *Performers and Partisans in Aphrodisias in the Roman and Late Roman Period*, London 1993, p. 7: "The essential element in the survival or disappearance of contests must have been finance."

42 LIEBESCHUETZ, *Antioch*, p. 137 n. 3.

43 *Codex Theod.* VI, 3, 1.

44 *Codex Iustinianus*, I, 36, 1.

praetorian prefect of the East for the second time in Nov/Dec 519.[45] This man had served as Anastasius' chief finance minister, with particular competence and interest over taxation.[46] He had been in part responsible for the stringent financial policies of Anastasius, as in 511 when he dissuaded the emperor from alleviating the tax burdens of Jerusalem and Palestine.[47] In later years, he would be denounced by John Lydus, who knew him as tight-fisted but personally corrupt, for his rapacity.[48] Should we see the hand of this tight-fisted Marinus behind the abolition of the Antiochene Olympic games?

Even so, the economic argument is more persuasive as an explanation for why Anastasius banned expensive *venationes* throughout the empire than for why a single festival was targeted. Ending the Olympic games of Antioch alone would not have had any appreciable effect on the financial situation of the empire, or even on the local economy of Syria.[49] Further, neither Justin and Justinian can easily be accused of being tight-fisted with respect to spectacles in that they could have afforded even very high costs if they thought the benefits to be commensurate with or to exceed the expenditures.[50] According to Procopius' *Anecdota*, Justinian's later reign had a definite effect on the public spectacles in the empire; the author attributed this not so much to Justinian's desire to uproot pagan practices, but, typically, to his relentless greed. Allegedly, the emperor "took all the revenues which the inhabitants of all the cities had been raising locally for their own civic needs and for their public spectacles, transferred and dared to mingle them with the national income".[51] What this suggests is not that the imperial court was economising, but that it was prioritising, even rationalising, its spending for games and spectacles. I will argue therefore that the Olympic games fell prey to a process of imperialisation and

---

45 See *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, II, ed. J.R. MARTINDALE, Cambridge 1982, pp. 726–728, s.v. "Marinus 7". He was a correspondent of Severus of Antioch, see SEVERUS of ANTIOCH, *Epistula selecta*, VII, 6 (dated to 513/517), in E.W. BROOKS (ed.), *The Sixth Book of the Select Letters of Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, in the Syriac Version of Athanasius of Nisibis*, London 1902–04.

46 John LYDUS, *De magistratibus*, III, 36 (ed. NIEBUHR, CSHB, p. 229).

47 See CYRIL of SCYTHOPOLIS, *Vita Sabae*, 54.

48 John LYDUS, *De magistratibus*, III, 49 (ed. NIEBUHR, CSHB, p. 242).

49 See H. KENNEDY, "The Last Century of Byzantine Syria: A Reinterpetation," *ByzF* 10, 1985, pp. 141–183.

50 VASILIEV, *Justin*, p. 376.

51 PROCOPIUS, *Anecdota*, XXVI, 6.

centralisation. Before I explain and substantiate this claim further, I would need to fill in some context.

In 520, the Thracian Vitalian, who had once threatened Anastasius' very reign, and as *magister militum in praesenti* was Justinian's bitter rival for power and influence, became *consul ordinarius*.[52] For his consular games, he presided over a particularly spectacular and successful series of races in the hippodrome of Constantinople. A disturbance came about upon the throwing of the *mappa* for the first race as an unusual combined procession of the Blues and Greens streamed out of the hippodrome, all the while acclaiming the new consul. Vitalian's popularity alarmed Justin and Justinian. When he was assassinated seven months later in July 520 (at the same time as when the Olympic games of that year were to commence), Justinian was justifiably considered the prime suspect.

Vitalian's consular games impressed upon Justinian the importance of public rituals and munificence to one's power in early Byzantine society. A year later, Justinian himself assumed the consulship, securing his status as the most important man in the state after his uncle Justin. The consular games of 521 were even more magnificent and glorious than those staged by the flamboyant Vitalian. Justinian made certain of that as he contrived to outshine the memories of his arch-rival. For Justinian, it was a matter of political survival. No expense was spared by the new consul to dazzle a citizenry jaded already by a constant succession of splendid spectacles. Gambling in a high-stakes game for a visible show of support from the assembled factions and people, Justinian poured out from the imperial fisc streams of accumulated gold. 288,000 gold *solidi*, according to Marcellinus Comes, generally a reliable witness for Constantinopolitan affairs, was the sum spent to stage the spectacles and to provide for the largesse distributed during the games.[53] A more normal sum spent on a consular inauguration was 2000 lbs of gold.[54]

The economy of Anastasius yielded a considerable surfeit of public wealth, making possible the extravagance of his successors; according to

---

52 JORDANES, *Romana*, 361; MARCELLINUS COMES, *Chronicon* a. 520; MALALAS, *Frag*. 43.

53 MARCELLINUS COMES, *Chronicon* a. 521 (PL 51, 940C): "Nam cclxxxviii millia solidorum in populum, inque spectacula sive in spectaculorum machinam distributa, xx leones, xxx pardos, exceptis aliis feris, in amphitheatro simul exhibuit. Numerosos praeterea phaleratosque in circo caballos jam donatis quoque impertivit aurigis, una dumtaxat ultimaque mappa insanienti populo denegata." See also VASILIEV, *Justin*, p. 376.

54 PROCOPIUS, *Anecdota*, XXIV, 12.

Procopius — who of course had an axe to grind here — Justin and Justinian managed to exhaust Anastasius' considerable legacy in a mere nine years. In addition, Justinian did not feel obliged to respect the legacy of Anastasius in another area: his consular games in 521 featured public displays of wild, exotic animals, and a series of beast hunts, *venationes*, banned by Anastasius in 499. Justinian showed, among other ferocious beasts, 20 lions and 30 panthers.[55] No hesitation about the *venatio*'s pagan association or its costs significantly impeded Justinian's provision of *panem et circenses*. Yet, this effective co-ruler of Justin realised that it was in the hippodrome where the central rituals of empire were to take place. There he held special races and presented to the charioteers richly-adorned horses to demonstrate his generosity.

This brief recapitulation of affairs leading up to 520 should remind us that Justinian, unlike many Christian polemicists, did not oppose the spectacles on principle, or accord prudent economy a very high priority. Quite on the contrary. His political career at a critical juncture of his rise to power clearly reinforced his belief that spectacular displays and munificence were indispensable to successful rule.

Justinian's rivalry with Vitalian sharpened his awareness of the important instrumentality of public spectacles, specifically, those which contributed to imperial prestige. In the case of the Olympic games, their demise was brought about not so much by their pagan — i.e., their insufficiently "secular" — character, but by their marginal value to imperial rituals and ceremonials. In the course of refashioning public life in the empire so that spectacles and festivals served either ecclesiastical and/or imperial interests, there necessarily entailed some reshuffling and redefinition. The Olympic games fell prey, I argue, not to christianisation but to imperialisation.

In theory, the Olympic games could serve as the showcase of imperial prestige and power. According to Malalas, both Diocletian and Maximian presided over the games as alytarchs, wearing the robes and insignia of that priestly office. Yet Justinian might not have wished to follow in their footsteps since the two emperors were pagans who, in their roles as alytarchs, were clad in the priestly garbs of Zeus worshippers; further, the presidency of the Olympic games might not have been considered auspicious in that Malalas associated it with abdication since after exchanging their imperial dress for the robes and role of alytarch, the two tetrarchs resigned their *imperium*. Such voluntary retirements were not precedents Justinian would have freely chosen to follow.

---

55 MARCELLINUS COMES, *Chronicon* a. 521 (PL 51, 940C).

More to the point, the Olympic games were held every four years at Daphne, a suburb of Antioch. They were therefore too marginal, temporally and spatially, to serve as a focal point of imperial rituals that were by then already firmly established in the hippodromes, as made evident by Corippus' equation of the hippodrome with the world in a speech praising Justin.[56] By the sixth century, Constantinople arguably had no important festival that was not connected to imperial ceremonial, especially after the abolition of the consulate in 542. Yet the same was not true of the other cities of the empire. Justinian's activities in 521 and following suggests that an effort to "overhaul" the public ceremonial life of the empire was under way.[57] The impetus was for centralisation and imperialisation. One such instance can be seen in the appropriation of the Bruma or Brumalia as an imperial festival.

IV. *The Bruma as a Justinianic Imperial Festival*

The Bruma or Brumalia was an ancient festival of Dionysus and of the wine harvest.[58] To set off the celebrations, a fire was lighted on Nov 24th and allowed to burn through the night to the 25th.[59] First attested in Tertullian's *De idolatria*, the Bruma is cited as a *feria* on Nov 24th in the western calendars of Philocalus (354) and Polemius Silvius (448).[60] Constantine Porphyrogenitus claims that Constantine I, Theodosius I and Marcian also celebrated the festival, but his witness is late and uncorroborated by earlier sources.

It was in the east, and only beginning with the sixth century, that the Bruma unambiguously emerged as an important festival. It is most abundantly documented in Justinianic sources: Malalas, Lydus, Choricius and Agathias.[61] But by the sixth century the Bruma, originally sacred to Dionysus, had also become an imperial festival.

Malalas (book seven) attributes the establishment of the festival to Romulus, recalling the author's famous explanation of how Romulus came

---

56 CORIPPUS, *In laudem Iustini*, I.

57 See J. GASCOU, "Les institutions de l'Hippodrome en Égypte," *BIFAO* 76, 1976, pp. 185–212, on the rationalisation of expenditures for chariot racing in Egypt during the sixth century.

58 See M. NILSSON, "Studien zur Vorgeschichte des Weinachtsfestes," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 19, 1916–19, pp. 62–64, 80–94.

59 CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, *De cerimoniis*, II, 18 (ed. NIEBUHR, CSHB, p. 701).

60 PHILOCALUS 354 (*CIL* I^2, p. 276); POLEMIUS SILVIUS (*CIL* I^2, p. 277).

61 See J.R. CRAWFORD, "De bruma et brumalibus festis," *BZ* 23, 1920, pp. 365–396, at 395.

to institute the chariot races in the Circus Maximus in order to divide the people and thereby divert their animosity towards him. Concerning the Bruma, Romulus allegedly made this proclamation:

> the emperor of the time must entertain his entire senate and officials and all who serve in the palace, since they are persons of consequence, during the winter when there is a respite from fighting. He began by inviting and entertaining first those whose names began with alpha, and so on, right to the last letter; he ordered his senate to entertain in the same way.[62]

In both instances, Malalas read back in a glaringly anachronistic fashion contemporary situations and concerns by attributing the invention of the Bruma and the Roman-style chariot games to Romulus. But this also served to emphasise the *romanitas* of the two institutions.

Later in the tenth-century *Ceremony Book*, the rituals surrounding the festival are given a fuller description. By then, the Bruma (*Broumalia*) clearly functioned as an occasion for imperial ceremony: the emperor would honour in alphabetical order his senators and courtiers with gifts of bags of gold.[63] Its celebrations, including acclamations for the emperor and wishes for his long reign, increased the solidarity of the imperial court as well as the prestige of the emperor. It may well be that the *Ceremony Book* is here drawing upon Peter the Patrician's *katastasis* and thus preserving sixth-century practices. In any case, when the rhetor Choricius of Gaza, a student of Procopius, praised Justinian's virtues in his *Oratio in Iustiniani Brumalibus* (c. 538–39), he clearly understood a link between the festival and the person of the emperor.[64] In fact, it appears that the Bruma was one of the festivals that received Justinian's personal attention and support, as he "outlined the programs and festivities for similar celebrations".[65]

Why were the Olympic games of Antioch (sacred to Zeus) banned while the Bruma (sacred to Dionysus) came to be promoted? Three sets of considerations may explain how imperial priorities secured the differing reception of the two festivals:

---

62 MALALAS, *Chronographia*, VII, 7; English transl. from E. JEFFREYS, M. JEFFREYS, & R. SCOTT et al., *The Chronicle of John Malalas. A Translation*, Melbourne 1986, p. 95.

63 CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, *De cerimoniis*, II, 18; (ed. NIEBUHR, pp. 601–607).

64 In R. FOERSTER & E. RICHTSTEIG (edd.), *Choricii Gazaei Opera*, Leipzig 1929, pp. 175–179.

65 J. BURY, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, I, London 1923, p. 51 n. 1; as cited in F. LITSAS, "Choricius and His Descriptions of Festivals of Gaza," *JÖB* 32:3, 1982, pp. 427–435, at 429.

(a) The ancient Roman origins of the Bruma (from its association with Romulus) made it more credible; similarly, the association of the circus games with Romulus made them acceptable. Likewise, the Kalends were justified on the basis that they were sacred to the ancient Romans.[66] On the other hand, it would be impossible to associate the Olympic games with anyone but Zeus. Given the noted Justinianic emphasis on *romanitas*, the games' purely Hellenic lineage was not a positive asset.

(b) By the sixth century, the culture of agonistic competition, both among athletic contestants and among the liturgants, was arguably no longer as important as before. The emperors had increasingly monopolised virtue and victory, sharing them only occasionally with victorious charioteers.[67] There was also no need for courtiers to compete in any contest for individual honour; it was enough that they tried their best to please the emperor. As such, the Olympic games had indeed become a bit anachronistic, but not exactly in the way suggested by Liebeschuetz.

(c) Lastly, certain festivals lend themselves to being staged as dignified ceremonial occasions. Such was not the case with the Olympic games. John Malalas describes with vivid detail how, when Diocletian presided over the games, members of his court joined in the competition: "Some of his dignitaries took part in the Olympic contests to make an honourable display. Some wrestled, while others boxed or took part in the *pankration*, or ran."[68] Such a scenario would suit a Nero, perhaps even a tetrarch, but it is much more difficult to imagine the dignitaries of Justinian's court (who flanked their emperor on the San Vitale mosaics) stripping down for Greek athletic contests. In contrast, an annual harvest festival celebrating fertility and abundance was more adaptable to the ceremonial needs of an early Byzantine court. The descriptions by Malalas and Porphyrogenitus also suggest that the Bruma was a more dignified occasion by Byzantine ceremonial standards, in the course of which strict order of precedence, *taxis*, was closely observed.

Historians who study the reigns of Justinian and other early Byzantine emperors often focus on their buildings. In the last years of the Roman Republic, in the midst of ruinously extravagant aristocratic competition, Cicero articulates the distinction between being lavish and being generous. The first characterised the behaviour of those who, for the sake of vanity, spend large sums on "public banquets, doles of meat among the people,

---

66 John LYDUS, *De mensibus*, IV, 3 (ed. NIEBUHR, CSHB, pp. 52–53).
67 See A. CAMERON, *Porphyrius the Charioteer*, Oxford 1973, pp. 244–252.
68 MALALAS, *Chronographia*, XII, 44 (trans. JEFFREYS et al., p. 169).

gladiatorial shows, magnificent games, and wild beast fights".[69] Citing the authority of Aristotle, Cicero argues that, with this kind of outlay, no dignity would be increased (*nec dignitas augeatur*), for "this kind of entertainment gives pleasure to children, silly women, slaves, and to the servile free. But a thoughtful man who soundly judges such things cannot possibly approve of them". Instead, sound judgement would incline one to invest in real estate and capital improvements such as building walls, docks, harbors, aqueducts, and "all those works which are of service to the community".[70] To this last list we need only add the construction of churches to make it an apt description of Procopius' panegyric of the achievements of Justinian.[71] Yet a distinterested observer would no doubt conclude that both forms were necessary to successful imperial rule; indeed the expenditures on games yielded more immediate political popularity than sums spent on essential constructions. No Roman emperor could be unaware of this basic principle; not many could flatly ignore it.

Now to return to the question posed at the outset. If one were to ask: "Was there a concerted imperial effort in the first quarter of the sixth century to suppress traditional games and festivals in order to christianise society more fully?" the answer has to be no. Here we may pose an additional query: "To what extent were imperial actions in the area of public games and spectacles influenced by the vocal, but dissensual, Christian anti-games polemics?"

Christians in late antiquity and early Byzantium embraced a variety of positions on games and spectacles. Yet not all projected voices proportionate to their strength as high notes always stand out readily from the bass. The anti-games lobby, rooted in the ascetic movement within the church, nevertheless had no institutional existence. Because of this, it bore the advantage of those who held an extreme minority view: it did not have to face the consequences of its convictions. Instead of standing out in sharp black and white, the middle area of broad consensus on games was delineated by varying shades of grey. This contrast between a clearly-articulated dissensual position and a more diffused, sometimes unspoken, consensus is, as the

---

69 CICERO, *De officiis*, II, 16.

70 CICERO, *De officiis*, II, 18.

71 Commenting on Justinian's construction of a palace and a bath in Bithynia, Procopius says (*De aedificiis*, V, 3, 8): "ἔνθα δὴ πολυτέλειαν ἐπιδέδεικται βασιλεῖ πρέπουσαν." On the changing preference in urban building patronage, see H. KENNEDY, "From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria," *Past & Present* 106, 1985, pp. 11–15; M. WHITTOW, "Ruling the Late Roman and Early Byzantine City: A Continuous History," *Past & Present* 129, 1990, pp. 18–19.

sociologist Edward Shils notes, characteristic of the way consensus and dissensus tend to manifest themselves socially.[72]

To a large degree, the emperors were the arbiters of this consensus on spectacles. As such, they should not be seen as merely reacting to others' moral prescriptions. Instead, Christian anti-games polemics provided emperors with ready-made pretexts (and very good ones at that) to intervene and alter the pattern of public life in the empire when they saw fit, but *only* when they saw fit. To posit the existence of a "Christian opposition" to the games is not to excuse one from asking why a particular Christian emperor, at a particular point in time, chose to end a festival, or ban a form of spectacle. In the examples reviewed above, the imperial élites appear capable of acting in their own interests, either broadly or narrowly defined, and were not held captive by particular patristic prescriptions concerning the nature of public life in a Christian Roman empire.[73]

---

72 See E. SHILS, *Center and Periphery. Essays in Macrosociology*, Chicago 1975.

73 I wish to thank the participants of the conference, who asked helpful and incisive and questions, and Roger Scott and Wolfgang Liebeschuetz, who conversed with me subsequently on themes treated in the paper.

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS CONTINUITY: 2

OLYMPIODORUS AND THE SURRENDER OF PAGANISM

Harold Tarrant / University of Newcastle

The Role of Olympiodorus

It usually happens when the name of Olympiodorus is mentioned, that the listener thinks of him in some way that he would not himself have thought appropriate. The term "Neoplatonist" is the first to come to mind, but like others of his school he did not think of himself as an adherent of any new or revised kind of Platonism. He studied above all the works of Plato, and aimed to bring the works of Plato to life before his own audience. He had no special sense of allegiance to Plotinus, whom we regard as the founder of Neoplatonism: he is mentioned a mere three times in the *Gorgias*-commentary, once in the *Alcibiades*-commentary, and three times in the *Phaedo*-commentary. Of other Neoplatonists, Iamblichus is mentioned with comparable infrequency, Porphyry less often still, and Proclus about twice as often. It was the vision of Plato that Olympiodorus was trying to recreate.

Even so, there is some doubt as to whether Olympiodorus would have considered the term "Platonist" strictly accurate. There was no difference as far as he was concerned between Platonist philosophy and Philosophy itself. The Platonist doctrine of a single principle of all things becomes simply the philosophers' doctrine at *In Grg.* 47.2. Other early philosophers — perhaps Pythagoras and the Eleatics as also in Proclus — had managed to achieve a greater or lesser appreciation of the Platonic vision, and could be used with appropriate caution, so that non-Platonists could still be philosophers — but Platonists listened to philosophy rather more closely than others. So that, while for Eusebius early Greek philosophy was working towards Christianity, for Olympiodorus and other late Neoplatonists it was rather a *praeparatio platonica*.[1]

All the same, we might very well resist the invitation to use the term "philosopher" for somebody as reluctant to be original as this — somebody whose activities were so strictly linked with the exegesis of texts of

---

1 Cf. I. MUELLER in G.R. MORROW (trans.), *Proclus: Commentary on Euclid's Elements*, Princeton 1992, drawing on the introduction to Proc. *Theol. Plat.* p. xiv: "According to this account, the philosophy of Plato — that is the truth — was understood in an imperfect way by unnamed early philosophers, and expressed in a perfect way by Plato."

antiquity. And while the term "commentator" is accurate enough, that would not do justice to the role which Olympiodorus thinks of himself as playing. That role is above all the role of teacher,[2] and his consciousness of the teacher-pupil relationship frequently comes to the fore in the *Gorgias*-commentary (41.6, 42.3, 43.2; cf. *In Alc.* 87–88, 133–134).

The kind of teacher that he sees himself as is much less clear. Certainly he is a moral teacher, and the moral messages which he extracts sometimes from the wider Platonic context,[3] sometimes from brief phrases in their dramatic context,[4] are frequent in the earlier lectures of this commentary. Such material is less frequently encountered or less prominently displayed in the other Platonic commentaries, even though that on the *Alcibiades* I was to accompany studies at an earlier stage of the Platonic curriculum. This may reflect a tendency on Olympiodorus' part to play down his role as moral teacher after Justinian's measures to suppress pagan teaching, since only the *Gorgias*-commentary is thought to belong to the period before A.D. 529.[5]

Besides Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy, which had been blended into a reasonably coherent whole by Ammonius, we have reason to believe that members of the Olympiodoran school were devoting themselves to various non-philosophical studies, such as mathematics, medicine, and apparently rhetoric too.[6]

Olympiodoran Hellenism

We find in Olympiodorus a teacher of antiquity, in this case of the Greek heritage that might find itself disappearing, threatened with extinction largely because of the unacceptable nature of Greek religion in a Christian era. He was in some ways trying to achieve for classical Greece what John Lydus was trying to achieve for the Roman traditions: ensuring that its heritage did

---

2 Cf. L.G. WESTERINK, *The Greek Commentaries on Plato's Phaedo: volume I, Olympiodorus*, Amsterdam 1976, p. 23: "a pliability so extreme indeed that it might be more correct to speak of a teaching routine than of a philosophy."

3 12.3, 17.6, 19.1, 31.4.

4 2.8, 3.4 (tris), 8.12, 15.9.

5 L.G. WESTERINK (ed.), *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, Amsterdam 1962, p. xv; idem, *The Greek Commentaries*, p. 21; A. CAMERON, "The Last Days of the Academy at Athens," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 15, 1969, p. 12.

6 For the evidence for non-philosophical studies, see WESTERINK, *The Greek Commentaries*, pp. 26–27. That for rhetoric is merely circumstantial, and based largely on what can be inferred from the *Gorgias*-commentary.

not die out.[7] For the Greek community at Alexandria, which has retained its identity until modern times, he must have been performing an important service, akin to the service which the classicist offers today. One might be tempted to regard figures like Lydus and Olympiodorus as the first classicists, seeing them already as champions of some ancient heritage that needed to be kept alive; but the main obstacle to describing them with such a term is that their activities clashed, for neither saw the Greek and Roman heritages as interlocking.

In Olympiodorus' case one should note the virtual non-appearance of Roman names in his commentaries.[8] He simply does not refer to individual Romans, as if blind to the western intellectual tradition. Teaching in Alexandria, he can scarcely avoid making the occasional reference to the things Egyptian other than those already present in the texts on which he comments, but there has certainly been no great effort to synthesise Greek and Egyptian material. Indeed, there is no indication that Olympiodorus has any substantial knowledge of Egyptian culture, and frequently one suspects that the Egyptian references may be due to their having been present in his sources. This devoted Hellenist had, after all, been the pupil of an Ammonius, and works in an interpretative tradition of which the Egyptian Plotinus is usually seen as the founder.

As a Hellenist, attempting to keep alive the Greek tradition in Alexandria, Olympiodorus was bound to defend much more than merely Plato and Aristotle. Homer in particular had to be promoted; with this came the responsibility to somehow present Grcek mythology in a respectable light, a duty which involved the need now for some ingenious allegorical interpretation, and now for the warning that myth must not be treated as history.[9] In particular he discouraged belief in any stories which might appear to make the lawgiver Lycurgus and the legendary Athenian King Theseus seem less than successful (*In Grg.* 44.1–8).

Well-known figures of fifth-century Greek history who had been highly regarded then had to be defended now too. This involved some careful footwork, since Plato had himself been a vocal critic of Athenian statesmen such as Miltiades, Themistocles, Cimon, and Pericles. Neither could Plato

---

7 On Lydus, see P. MAAS, *John Lydus and the Roman Past*, London 1992.

8 The *Gorgias*-commentary mentions Capito in the title to an Aristides work. Rome is itself mentioned in the *Phaedo*-commentary, 13.15, and Romans are mentioned *Meteora*-commentary, p. 121.9ff. The *Phaedo*-commentary also mentions an unknown Varus (significantly spelt Οὔαρος. The *Alcibiades*-commentary and *Categories*-commentary have nothing.

9 *Gorgias*-commentary, 44.8.

be seen as a slanderer (as Aristides had tried to paint him), nor would it do to regard Plato's criticisms as indicative of the worthlessness of these men. Similarly rhetoric cannot be condemned in itself; only its misuse can be viewed as the object of Plato's criticism.[10] An orator as famous as Demosthenes is regarded as on a par with Themistocles and Pericles as an orator (*In Grg.* 1.13), and he is seen as sharing with Lycurgus the benefit of having studied with Plato, so that both these two and Isocrates are deemed worthy of the appellation "admirable" (*In Grg.* 41.10).

Drama fared less well, though the opening lines of the *Gorgias*-commentary imply that the dramatic presentation of acceptable characters is to be allowed. It is drama as actually practised at the Athenian dramatic festivals that is seen as a problem; the stories dramatised in comedy[11] seem to be its primary problem for Olympiodorus, while it is its encouragement of the irrational emotions that is seen as excluding tragedy from the ideal state (*In Grg.* 33.3). It may very well be that Olympiodorus associates the dramatic festivals with democracy, which was a feature of ancient Athens that he cannot approve of.[12] This is not simply the result of present political expedient, though strong interests in political philosophy had been necessarily unfashionable since the advent of the Roman Empire; rather it stemmed from a strongly held Platonic belief in the rule of those qualified by their excellence and expertise to rule. Only aristocracy, the rule of the best, was approved, and while there is no frank assessment of the Byzantine régime, there is indication enough at *In Grg.* 45.2 that he does not see it as an aristocracy. Otherwise he would be in politics himself. The origins of aristocracy are seemingly traced to the Pythagorean communities (*In Grg.* 46.1), thus serving to link the noblest form of government with a figure not otherwise much promoted by Olympiodorus' commentaries. That is because the promotion of Pythagoreanism by the Neoplatonists had traditionally been linked with their alleged metaphysical and theological system, and

---

10 *Gorgias*-commentary, for example, 1.13.

11 The γραώδη μυθάρια, 33.3: "old wives' tales" perhaps. He is more likely to thinking of Old Comedy, which he often cites.

12 Ol. is much influenced by the parallel between the individual's constitution and the state's constitution which is central to the *Republic*. Indeed he seems to believe that the investigative aim of the *Gorgias* (proem 5, 4.1, 11.1, 15.1, 5, 18.1, 24.1, 25.1, 32.2, 34.2, 35.1, 45.1) is as much to discern the origins of the individual's *constitutional happiness* as the state's. In so far as drama encourages and feeds the forces *within us* which are inferior to reason, it is also encouraging a non-aristocratic constitution *within us*.

Olympiodorus seems to have little taste for that kind of theory: or too little nerve to promote it in the face of Christian hostilities.

Summing up this general picture of Olympiodorus, his mission is above all the promotion and defence of ancient Greek culture in general, and particularly its philosophical and scientific achievements, but not without criticism of all its non-aristocratic tendencies. This promotion of Greek culture and philosophy is not intended as a threat in any way to other cultures and philosophies, and in particular it is presented in such a way as to avoid giving offence to the Christian religion. Cultural coexistence in Alexandria had a long history, and this was no time to try to change that. Above all, however, Olympiodorus was not the kind to want to try to change that. He shows no disrespect for his rivals, and indeed the Olympiodoran school continued after Olympiodorus under the leadership of men with Christian names. This is unlikely to have happened if Olympiodorus' tolerance had been purely for the sake of political and financial expediency. If we want to understand Olympiodorus' tolerance we have to inquire into its philosophic foundations, and these foundations are surprisingly Socratic.

Olympiodorus and Socrates

It is notoriously difficult to separate Plato's philosophy from Socrates' philosophy. Likewise it is often very difficult to judge whether Olympiodorus is promoting Plato or Socrates, and one can well believe that he was not sure himself. But one can say with confidence that he was much more conscious of promoting the Socratic element in Plato than most Neoplatonists had been. Plato had long been seen as a kind of amalgam of Pythagoras and Socrates, the former supplying the theological and scientific vision, the latter offering new techniques for moral inquiry. Olympiodorus agrees with the view that Plato had only mastered the basics of ethics with Socrates, and went to study with Sicilian Pythagoreans to expand his education (*In Grg*. 41.6). However, he does not attribute the limitations of Plato's Socratic education to Socrates' own restricted vision, but rather thinks that Plato was too young to have been exposed to "the deeper aspects of Socrates' discourses" (ibid.). In this respect he concurs with the view that Socrates did not always make himself very explicit. Pythagoras had been seen as giving Plato *doctrine*, while Socrates resisted committing himself. Neoplatonists were accordingly suspicious that the Socratic element in Plato could be represented as scepticism (or "suspensionism" as they now preferred

to call it).[13] But in countering this view of Plato's Socratic heritage, they also mastered it. One man's Socratic doubt became Olympiodorus' *philosophic caution* (*In Phd.* 8.17), and philosophic caution was something which he could happily admire.

As for "Socratic ignorance" it is clear that Olympiodorus does not take it very seriously. At *In Grg.* 34.3 in response to one case of the Socratic profession of ignorance (*Grg.* 509a) he asks the rhetorical question "What? Is Socrates ignorant?", and argues that all Socrates lacks is "divine knowledge".[14]

Olympiodorus may well have been regarded as something of a specialist on the Socratic aspects of Plato, for the three extant commentaries (*In Alc.*, *In Grg.*, *In Phd.*) concern the three works in the Neoplatonic (Iamblichan) curriculum most obviously connected with Socrates.[15]

Socrates indeed became something of a philosophic hero for Olympiodorus. He feels obliged (*In Grg.* 41.3–4) to defend him against the attempts by Aristides to turn Plato's arguments against the orators against Plato's venerable master. Aristides tries to show that Socrates failed to live up to the standards which Plato had set for the *politikos*: Didn't Socrates fail to improve Alcibiades and Critias morally? Didn't Socrates' other pupils (i.e. the Athenian people who were the objects of his mission) fail to show gratitude towards him, and indeed cause him suffering? Olympiodorus replies

---

13 Ammonius wrote a *monobiblos* against the sceptic interpretation of one (69d) or more passages of the *Phaedo* (Ol. *In Phd.* 8.17, cf. 6.14, 10.15, *In Grg.* 36.7); the anonymous *Prolegomena* (10) takes a hostile attitude towards the sceptic view of Plato in general. Centuries before Numenius had expressed misgivings about the way Socrates has given many the impression of having an amazing fluidity of belief (fr. 24.51–56 Des Places), though he believed that Plato was aware that he was essentially a follower of Pythagoras.

14 In the *Alcibiades*-commentary he deals with a case of alleged lack of self-knowledge (comparing *Phdr.* 230a), and arrives at an even more restricted explanation of "Socratic ignorance": Socrates does not know himself ἐνθουσιαστικῶς even though he knows himself θεολογικῶς and in all other senses.

15 Apart from the *Cratylus*, whose Socratic content is not obvious at all, and possibly the *Symposium*, which contains very little typical Socratic argument, these three works would normally be regarded as the earliest in this curriculum, giving them a greater claim to Socraticity. There is no doubt that even the middle-period *Phaedo* has much to say about Socrates himself. Of other works in the curriculum most are normally placed relatively late in Plato's career, though Ol. is not blind to the insights into Socrates offered by particular passages of the *Theaetetus*. The *Sophist* is the only one of these later works which Ol. is known to have commented upon.

that Socrates had an excellent record as a moral teacher; that the teacher, unlike the politician, has no chance of ensuring moral improvement if his pupils do not obey him; that Alcibiades did not study long enough with Socrates, but that he always adopted an attitude of grateful reverence towards him; that Critias earmarked Socrates for death because he was always criticising them, and indeed that was why the Athenian people put him to death. Admittedly Olympiodorus does not believe that his ever-just God had no reason for guiding Socrates towards death, but he believes that it is related to a previous life (whether embodied or disembodied) and thus that it is not for us to discern such a reason (*In Grg.* 17.2).

His very death seems to have been a source of inspiration to Olympiodorus, in so far as he saw in his distant predecessor's execution the price that one might have to pay for talking about spiritual beings not recognized by the state religion (*In Alc.* 22). Olympiodorus has no wish to martyr himself and says that he is adapting his account to suit times present, but this should not be taken to indicate that he is backing down from his principles or that he does not admire somebody who holds his ground.[16] Socrates' *daimonion* has led to a discussion of guardian spirits; these are then interpreted as guardian angels (21), and finally, in the most de-theologised account, as the human being's conscience (23), the ultimate glory of their being which remains unerring however far astray the rest of their soul may go.[17] Socrates' difference, it seems, is attributable to his willingness to hear and obey the inner voice of his conscience, an inner voice which will always remain true.

The key to the understanding of Olympiodorus' conciliatory attitude towards Christianity (and much else besides) is to be found in his interpretation of the Socratic method of investigation. The method is above all one which reveals the presence of discordant beliefs within the individual. Any individual who has false beliefs, will, because he also has an unerring "conscience" (to use the conciliatory term), also have true ones, whose conflict with the false ones can be revealed by the *elenchus*. Similarly the existence of a disagreement between two persons must mean that error resides in one of them. Investigation which leads to agreement will, if conducted with due respect for one's conscience, also lead to the elimination of at least one erroneous position. Olympiodorus *(In Alc.* 92), like Proclus before him

---

16 On Olympiodorus' readiness to hold his ground on matters of religion (particularly in the *In Grg.*) see WESTERINK, *Anonymous Prolegomena*, pp. xv–xvii.

17 On *In Alc.* 21–23, see WESTERINK, *Anonymous Prolegomena*, pp. xviii–xix.

(*In Alc.* 294), knows that agreements can sometimes be reached which do not guarantee the truth of what is agreed to, but agreement nevertheless seems to become an important indicator of the likely truth of the position agreed upon. More importantly, if one allows that Socrates with his famous *daimonion*, is the supreme example of a human being constantly allowing his "conscience" to be heard, one soon realises that *agreement with Socrates* is an extremely strong indication of truth. This should be added to Olympiodorus' regard for the concept of Socratic Midwifery in Plato's *Theaetetus*, one element of which is Socrates' claim that the God has given him the special gift of being able to distinguish true offspring from false (150b–151d).

The Common Notions

This respect for agreement as a truth-indicator is nothing new in Greek philosophy.[18] In particular it brings to mind (a) the considerable use which Aristotle (and perhaps other members of the Old Academy)[19] made of the *endoxon*;[20] and (b) the Stoic "common notions", or "natural notions" as they are often called. These were identified with the objects of recollected knowledge in Platonism, and freely used by Platonising authors such as Cicero (TD 1.57), Galen, and Albinus, and Alcinous.[21] The *Elements* of Euclid also made use of common notions. Olympiodorus does not ordinarily make use of the term *endoxon*, even in the Aristotelian commentaries, though three of Socrates' rebuttals of Callicles are said to be based on endoxa (*In Grg.* 29.3); but he attaches considerable importance to the natural notions, and sees the very structure of the *Gorgias* as interlinked with the increasing degree of remoteness from the common notions in the increasingly degenerate interlocutors.[22]

---

18 See H. TARRANT, "Agreement and the Self-Evident in Philo of Larissa," *Dionysius* 5, 1981, pp. 66–97; idem, *Scepticism or Platonism?*, Cambridge 1985, on this feature of the late Hellenistic period.

19 We are told that Eudoxus of Cnidus actually acquired the nick-name of Endoxus (DIOG. LAERT. 8, 91: cf. the prediction of the Egyptian priests at 8, 90 that Eudoxus would become *endoxos*).

20 It is significant that in this case too the standing of those who were in agreement was vital to the value of such a truth-indicator.

21 For their part in Alcinous (*Didasc.* 4) and Middle Platonism generally, see J. WHITTAKER (ed.), *Alcinoos: Enseignement des Doctrines*, Paris 1990, p. 84 n. 58.

22 See particularly the opening of chapters 11 and 25 where the arguments with Polus and Callicles are introduced.

A similar case of Olympiodorus actually judging the moral qualities of an individual is found in the *Alcibiades*-commentary; here we find Olympiodorus attributing the fact that Alcibiades has had a good idea of the wrongness of injustice from his childhood, before he could be exposed to teachers, to the influence of the common notions (90). This may remind one of Plato's care in establishing that Meno's slave boy had never been taught the kind of geometrical knowledge that he is revealed to be in possession of (*Meno* 84c, 85de). The common notions are thought to be the source of natural knowledge that we all share in to some extent by virtue of our being human, and whose presence is quite independent of any teaching. According to *In Grg*. 7.1 they have been supplied by God in his wisdom along with our freedom to choose in order that we should have the right criterion by which to choose. They are the cause of our very pursuit of the good (*In Grg*. 20.2; 38.3). Hence in the *Phaedo*-commentary, when Olympiodorus asks in response to 65a2 whether ordinary people also detach the soul from the body, he gives an affirmative answer: these people are free agents operating in accordance with the common notions, and so know in a sense (τρόπον τινὰ) about detaching the soul. However far one sinks into error it is not possible to be completely oblivious to the common notions (*In Grg*. 28.4, 39.6).

In logic the common notions supply important premises from demonstration (*In Grg*. 3.1), and indeed they offer a higher level of conviction than either the persuasion-induced kind or the teaching-induced kind — for teaching uses demonstrations, while the indemonstrable premises employed by demonstrations are totally reliant on our common notions (*In Grg*. 48.5, *In Alc*. 18). Even when it comes to disputes about physics, such as that concerning the basic "stuff" of the universe, Olympiodorus believes that one may safely follow whoever is most in accord with the common notions. Philosophic dispute can thus be resolved, though variants in myth (which is unrelated to such notions) cannot (*In Grg*. 44.7). Plato's approved myths, however, convey the same messages as important common notions, such as "God is good", "One must honour one's parents", etc., differing only insofar as the message is to be hidden (*In Grg*. 41.2).

Altogether Olympiodorus has great faith in these notions which constitute an orderly human subconscious, if only they are allowed free reign. Thus one individual who follows the common notions is preferable to a multitude who ignore them (*In Grg*. 20.7). The importance that they take on in the *Gorgias*-commentary is illustrated by the claim that Plato actually refutes Callicles in order that we may have confidence in the truth and draw as close as possible to the common notions. This almost amounts to the view that Plato writes to awaken the common notions within us.

That many parts of the Platonic corpus are written in the hope of drawing out our ideas is surely true. But he wants to draw out any ideas, right or wrong. Olympiodorus knows this, to the extent that the *Alcibiades*-commentary provides that the first section of the work is elenctic, and exposes Alcibiades' double ignorance, while the third part is maieutic and helps him to draw the consequences of correct ideas within him (11–12). Yet Socratic midwifery itself, his maieutic art immortalised in Plato's *Theaetetus* (150b–151d), involves the bringing to the surface of false ideas as well as true ones. Whereas Olympiodorus recognises elenctic refutation as a *preliminary* to the delivery of the truth, Plato has the one art for delivering what might turn out to be either.

Belief in the common notions has led Olympiodorus to take a much more optimistic view of Socratic processes than Plato had done. Thus he has come to associate Socratic midwifery specifically with the process of leading a young man on through questioning to realise the truth that resides within him in its infancy. *Elenchus* is for falsehood, midwifery for truth. For him, as in the *Meno* rather than the *Theaetetus*, truth is not buried unfathomably deep; it resides everywhere, just below the surface — indeed it is a divine gift to all of us who are prepared to take note of it.

Common Notions and Christian Notions

There are many results of such a view, but one of the most important is the tolerance of other views that appear to be held by a dedicated body of people committed to discovering the truth within themselves. Wide consensus was a preliminary indication of truth (*In Alc.* 92); wide consensus among the right kind of people was an indication of an altogether different order. "It is not the case," he tells us, "that those who agree with one other are in all cases knowledgeable; witness the Democriteans, who agree on the existence of void but are for this reason unknowledgeable — because it doesn't exist. But those who are knowledgeable do agree with one another ..." It is the example here that is instructive, for whereas Proclus had used that of the Christians as people who are agreed but in error, Olympiodorus not only rejects this one (as might perhaps have been necessary for his survival as a teacher), but declines to use the example of any respected religious or philosophic group. Democriteans, like the Epicureans who may in fact be covered by the term, would have been the obvious examples of atheists masquerading as philosophers; thus they would have been in obvious conflict with what Olympiodorus recognises as the common notions, while the Christians tended to agree with them.

In order to appreciate the compatibility of Olympiodorus' common notions with Christianity, one may examine a list of propositions which he refers to as being supported directly by our common notions:

1. things equal to the same thing are equal to each other (*In Grg*. 6.5 & *Euclid*)
2. if you add equals to equals the totals are equal (*In Grg*. 6.5 & *Euclid*)
3. the rhetor understands what is just (*In Grg*. 10.4)
4. each craft understands its own special subject matter (*In Grg*. 11.2)
5. the good is what is to be pursued (*In Grg*. 20.2, cf. 39.6)
6. what's just is fine (*In Grg*. 21.1)
7. what's fine is good (*In Grg*. 21.2)
8. suffering injustice is worse than committing it (*In Grg*. 21.6)
9. it is not good to save some people (*In Grg*. 38.8)
10. God is good (*In Grg*. 41.2)
11. one must honour one's parents (*In Grg*. 41.2)
12. one must honour God (*In Grg*. 41.2)
13. unjust people are bad (*In Alc*. 90)
14. good things are so by nature (*In Alc*. 105)
15. one has to pursue what is just, good, and expedient (*In Alc*. 131).

The list includes a great many principles of traditional piety. If these are the most important beliefs for a person to hold then there is no reason why Olympiodorus should not have felt a certain community of spirit with his Christian rivals. If Christians were thought somewhat simple in their beliefs, even this was not to be held against them, for the comment on *Meteor*. 349a26 declares that those who follow the common notions (sc. without investigation) speak better than those who investigate: basic theology, no doubt, is better than science!

Another feature of this great confidence in the common notions as the foundations of knowledge is perhaps the assumption that human beings can express similar ideas in very different language. This assumption emerges in the course of his discussion of Socrates' *daimonion* (*In Alc*. 21–23), and in the treatment of the names of the pagan gods at *In Grg*. 4.3 and 47.2–4. Certainly the willingness to hunt for a deeper meaning in both poetic and philosophic myth, and in many of the remarks of Plato and Aristotle, could be extended if one desired to the activity of finding a deeper meaning in Christianity or in traditional Egyptian religion. Naturally Olympiodorus did not do this, for it would have been inviting unnecessary hostility from the authorities and impeding his mission as a Hellenist.

For sure Olympiodorus had a few disagreements with the Christians, such as where he refuses to accept the idea of eternal punishment or where he argues that suicide can sometimes be justified,[23] but ultimately he must be reckoned as very accommodating to the Christian position. Westerink refers to the extreme pliability of his doctrine.[24] Extreme pliability of doctrine, coupled with a firm belief in a few important principles, had been found long ago in Socrates. The result in that case was that a great number of philosophies had looked up to him. Olympiodorus had little of Socrates' greatness, but this admirer of Socrates did at least share his predecessor's ability to rise above the technical details of doctrine. This could do little to halt the march of Christianity and its victory over paganism, and his Christian rivals did not share this extreme pliability. What it did perhaps is to smooth the transition into a fundamentally Christian platonism at Alexandria.

---

23 Cf. WESTERINK, *Anonymous Prolegomena*, pp. xvii–xviii.
24 WESTERINK, *The Greek Commentaries*, p. 23.

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS CONTINUITY: 3

COVERING THE NAKEDNESS OF NOAH: RECONSTRUCTION AND DENIAL IN THE AGE OF JUSTINIAN

Patrick Gray / York University, Ontario

In the image of Aeneas fleeing Troy, bearing on his shoulders Anchises and leading young Iulus by the hand, Virgil gave to the age of Augustus a magnificent image of a universal conundrum: how to balance the need to move forward into the future (to change) against the need to bear the burden of the past (to maintain conformity). As we know, Virgil grasped the nettle forthrightly. The past had to be respected with all due filial piety, but in the end it had to be buried: change took precedence over conformity.

We breathe a palpably different air when we turn to the age of Justinian, at least on the matter of religion. On some matters, certainly, there was a forthright approach not unlike Virgil's: "Our former law has not yielded the anticipated results", admit the prooemia to many laws of the time with disarming frankness, "and so we are going to try a new approach..." But not so with religion. On this matter the age approached the issue of conformity and change in a complex, tension-ridden, and ambivalent way that is particularly fascinating.

A fruitful point of entry into this issue is provided by the quite different image for facing the problem of continuity and change that seems to have sprung to mind when people of the age of Justinian, as compared with the age of Augustus, were confronted with that challenge. Because it involves concealment, the image cannot be a forthright one, nor can it be forthrightly acknowledged. It emerges, rather, like a dream-image, unintentionally revealing an inner conflict in a symbolic way.

The image that emerges in this way for the age of Justinian is taken from a story in Genesis:

> Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and became drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. *Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it upon both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.*[1]

---

1 Genesis 9, 20–23.

The image of the two brothers walking backwards with their eyes averted is, just as an image, an image of self-deception and ambivalence. To stumble upon it in sixth-century texts — in the *Confession of the True Faith* of Justinian,[2] in a forged text cited by Leontius of Jerusalem,[3] and in a newly-discovered text of the Monophysite Timothy Aelurus,[4] — is to be troubled by its elusive and allusive quality. What does the use of this image of concealing and revealing conceal or reveal?

For the age of Justinian, Noah symbolised the fathers of the patristic past (the "fathers" of the councils, as Justinian makes explicit in the text referred to, and the list of "select fathers" being canonised as benchmarks of orthodoxy at that very moment in florilegia and in conventions of theological reference).[5] Ideologically, the patristic past was conceived of as monolithic, pure, unchanging. The blasphemy of looking at this past's nakedness would be to admit that any one of those fathers had erred or even changed his mind,[6] that one father had disagreed with another,[7] or that any council had ever tolerated any person or view later thought to be heretical. To see and announce such "nakedness" would call down upon oneself the curse that fell on Ham. On the other hand, the past could not be left as it was, with the evidence for doctrinal inconsistency and diversity — inconceivable to the age of Justinian — shamefully uncovered. It was a painful dilemma. What the

---

2 *Conf.*, E. SCHWARTZ (ed.), in *Drei dogmatische Schriften Iustinians*, ABAW 18, 1939, 2nd ed. 1973, p. 158, lines 21–27 (Greek) and p. 159, lines 17–24 (Latin).

3 *Monoph.*, *M.* 86, col 1849B–C.

4 "Timothy Aelurus: *Against the Definition of the Council of Chalcedon*," (tr.) R.Y. EBIED & L.R. WICKHAM, in C. LAGA, J.A. MUNITIZ, & L. van ROMPAY (edd.), *After Chalcedon*, Louvain 1985, p. 164. Though the direct allusion is to Joseph of Arimathea's covering of the crucified Jesus' nakedness against scoffers (JOHN 19: 38), I believe there is an unmistakeable echo of the Noah story.

5 See my article on the emergence of the canon of "select fathers": P.T.R. GRAY, "'The Select Fathers': Canonizing the Patristic Past," *StP* 23, 1989, pp. 21–36.

6 Leontius of Jerusalem asserts of Cyril, for example, that he "clearly testifies to us his harmony with himself and with the truth..." despite the verbal inconsistencies in what he wrote (*Monoph.* 1813C).

7 Here one thinks at once of Justinian's insistence that there has been no development whatsoever in the patristic tradition: "Since the correct and inviolate faith, which the holy and catholic church of God preaches, accepts no kind of innovation..." begins the first justinianic legislation of *Cod.* I, 1, 5. The same insistence is revealingly expressed by Leontius of Jerusalem in *Monoph.* 1849D when he says "None of the select fathers is at variance with himself or with his peers in respect of the intention of the faith".

age felt was required, it is suggested, and what in fact it did, was to reproduce the delicate ballet performed by the good sons of Noah: it had to cover the past's nakedness (its inconsistencies had to be covered over, and an image of the past consistent with the ideology maintained about its monolithic orthodoxy had to be presented) but it had to achieve this by walking backwards and turning its face away, i.e., by concealing somehow from others and even from itself what it had seen and what it was doing. It had to do what it claimed not to do, and it had to claim not to do what it did. The quest for religious conformity in the age of Justinian, insofar as it claimed to be a quest for conformity with the past — and it claimed to be nothing else — was in fact a quest for conformity with a past which the age was constantly in the unadmitted process of constructing to fit its ideology, its image of what a properly clothed past ought to look like! This changing of the past while denying and repressing knowledge of the change will be referred to hereafter as "the double movement".

It is not surprising if the double movement has gone unnoticed. It is easy to impose our own values on the evidence, accusing our subjects of "bad scholarship", i.e. to accept the changing of the past as simply a mistake, and so fail to notice the more complex reality of the situation. Moreover, it is easy to assume that quite separate actions were involved, that one group of people, whether through bad scholarship or through deliberate intent, falsified the past, while another group innocently accepted these falsifications as true. The doubleness of the movement is thus not noticed because it is divided into two movements having nothing to do with each other.

Yet the facts belie such assumptions. The very same writers who adopt as true manifest misrepresentations of what the earlier tradition said, when those misrepresentations support their position, are extremely sophisticated about exposing such misrepresentations when used by their opponents; moreover, they are all evidently exposed to the arguments from their opponents alleging misrepresentation.[8] We are therefore dealing neither with bad scholarship nor with innocent victims of the mistakes or malicious forgeries of others, but with people who at some level must be capable of being aware that they are misrepresenting the past by their use of forged or distorted texts, yet implicitly deny that they are doing so.

We are left, then, with a double movement of reconstruction and denial. The most difficult issue, really, is interpreting the denial. Moderns are tempted to accept too easily a Machiavellian interpretation — to imagine that

---

8 For a more detailed discussion of this point, see P.T.R. GRAY, "Forgery as an Instrument of Progress," *BZ* 81, 1988, pp. 284–289.

the reconstructers of the past who simultaneously deny that they are reconstructing it are simply and intentionally lying, for their own cynical reasons. Short of turning up a confession, though, it is never easy to tell whether the reconstructers of the past are deliberate and self-conscious in what they do. The fact is that in our own experience such deliberate "forgery" is very rare. Human beings are not, by and large, intentional and self-conscious liars when they distort or misrepresent or interpret in the most favourable light the events of the past they feel to have a direct bearing on their present experience. Yet all human beings do those things all of the time — as we are constantly reminded by the particularly vexed problem of conflicting evidence from legal witnesses. The deceivers are themselves most often the first victims of their deceptions. On the past we human beings seem, really, to be capable of almost infinite self-deception, whether gross or subtle. It should come as no surprise, then, if the reconstructers of the past in the age of Justinian, in typically human fashion, deceived themselves at the conscious level first of all. And it should therefore come as no surprise if the image of the covering of Noah's nakedness really does, as we have speculated, reveal the age's repressed, subconscious or semi-conscious tension about its reconstruction of thc rcligious past in its struggle to achieve conformity.

Some examples will be adduced of situations in which this analysis suggested by the image of the covering of Noah's nakedness seems to be *à propos*. First, however, we turn to a brief but necessary discussion of the background.

The matrix for any discussion of religious conformity in the age of Justinian was the aftermath of the Council of Chalcedon of 451. The challenge posed by the large Monophysite faction was always to demonstrate that Chalcedon was true to the doctrine of the sainted Cyril of Alexandria, and that it was not in some way Nestorian. The argument has been made elsewhere that the majority at Chalcedon intended what they said there in a cyrillian sense, and that a legitimate case could be made on the first point, the point of Chalcedon's cyrillianism[9] — but that would be true only for the majority of the participants.

There were two problems that remained to dominate the debate for more than a century. (1) Historically, Chalcedon had included others than the cyrillian majority. Its statement of faith could be and was accepted by people of a more typically Western approach to christology, and by people from the

---

9 See the preliminary argument in P.T.R. GRAY, *The Defense of Chalcedon in the East (451–553)*, Leiden 1979, pp. 7–16.

school of Antioch. In this spirit of inclusiveness, Chalcedon had accepted Theodoret of Cyrus when he disowned Nestorius, and had received a letter from Ibas of Edessa that included a number of anti-cyrillian sentiments. Further, it had not condemned Theodore of Mopsuestia, the teacher of Nestorius, who had died in the peace of the church and continued to be revered as a father of the church in some centres into the sixth century. (2) Even Cyril posed a problem, since he had in the early stages of his controversy with Nestorius rejected the formula "in two natures", but later on accepted it. If he was to be revered as the authoritative "father of the church" both sides wanted to make of him, simple recognition of the fact that he had changed his mind was out of the question.[10]

The Monophysites continued to reject an inclusive Chalcedon, and any version of Cyril other than the Cyril of the early, anti-two-natures statements. For their part, the defenders of Chalcedon took the opposite position about Cyril — his early statements were to be interpreted in terms of the later. More significantly, as these "Neochalcedonians" developed systematically their vision of an exclusively cyrillian Chalcedon, the evidence for an inclusive, unsystematic Chalcedon came to seem more and more implausible to them. The Chalcedon they came to demand conformity to was an exclusively cyrillian Chalcedon, and the Cyril they came to demand conformity to was an entirely chalcedonian Cyril. In short, the struggle for religious conformity engaged in in the age of Justinian was a struggle that demanded conformity to a vision of the past constructed in terms they could no longer reconcile with the evidence that lay before them in the records of the genuine historical past. Moreover, to add urgency to the whole situation, one widely desired form that conformity might take — peace with the Monophysites — could be achieved only if the force of that evidence was somehow eliminated, since only an exclusively cyrillian Chalcedon could be accepted by the Monophysites. The moment was, thus, rich in possibilities for just the kind of double movement we have postulated as lying behind the curious image of the covering of Noah's nakedness.

Let us turn, now, to some examples and attempt to see the double movement at work. Exactly as might be expected, the examples involve just the kinds of reconstruction that were most necessary: the reconstruction of Cyril as a chalcedonian; the reconstructing of Chalcedon as strictly cyrillian

---

10 "Never were the fathers being changed on either side; they were, as it were, marching down the royal way...." said SEVERUS in his *Orations against Nephalius*, *CSCO*, script. syr. 7, p. 4 (translation). Cf. the identical sentiment in the text from Leontius of Jerusalem cited in n. 7.

and, as part of the cyrillianising of the chalcedonian position, the excising of the antiochene tradition from the orthodox mainstream.

From the time of Chalcedon on, one of the primary items on the agenda of Chalcedon's defenders was to demonstrate that Cyril of Alexandria's authentic teaching contained the major position of Chalcedon, i.e. two natures in one *prosopon* and *hypostasis*. Numerous florilegia were produced that showed, or purported to show, that this was so. The most developed and sophisticated argument was that put forward by Leontius of Jerusalem in his *Contra Monophysitas*, who can stand here for his whole party. Many of his predecessors had pointed to texts in the later Cyril which suggested or admitted two natures but, as has been mentioned, those texts were dismissed by Monophysites as the results of the later Cyril's eirenic accommodation to the Antiochenes and as therefore not expressing what he really thought. Leontius, as much as they, wants a Cyril who did not change his mind, a Cyril who "clearly testifies to us his harmony with himself and with the truth".[11] Leontius' approach with Cyril, as with the other fathers in his florilegium, is to search for the "intention" behind the words: he finds behind Cyril's avowal of "one incarnate nature of the Word of God" the intention of affirming "one *hypostasis*" and "two natures", the existence of the second, human nature being implied, he argues, by the addition in Cyril's own formula of the word "incarnate".[12] There is some force in Leontius' argument, since Cyril does seem to have used "nature" in a sense very much like that later given to "hypostasis". The point here, though, is that he is forcing the early Cyril into the exact mould of the later to make him internally consistent, as a father of the church had to be. In this, his is only a more subtle version of the claim made by Justinian, in plain contradiction of some pretty explicit statements of Cyril, that "one can demonstrate that St. Cyril never said one nature of divinity and humanity, neither in his other writings, nor in this letter in which he submitted his Twelve Chapters, nor in the Twelve Chapters themselves."[13]

That Leontius is, at some half-conscious level, aware of the subtle but real transformation of the very past to which he is demanding conformity is revealed, it seems, in the accusation implied in his citation of a forged text of "Timothy Aelurus": "When [Cyril] became contradictory in his own words, he [Cyril] sowed the seeds of the implacable war that now holds sway in the

---

11 See n. 6.

12 *M*. 86, col. 1805B. The argument about "incarnate" was used earlier by Nephalius of Alexandria.

13 JUSTINIAN, *A Letter on the Three Chapters*, in K.P. WESCHE (tr.), *On the Person of Christ*, Crestwood N.Y. 1991, p. 126.

churches.... [Then Severus appeared and] healed what was unstable and uncertain of Cyril, as if some son who honours his father clothed his begetter's dishonour in seemly garments."[14] A man who uses a forged text imputed to his opponents allegedly boasting about "correcting" the past to accuse his opponents of forgery has forgery and correcting the past on his mind! Surely what we have here is an obvious case of projection: this reference to the clothing of Noah's nakedness, for all that it performs a real function in Leontius' argument,[15] evidently at the same time reveals Leontius' own sense of what he has been doing himself in reconstructing the early, rabidly anti-Nestorian Cyril in the image of the eirenic — and chalcedonian! — later Cyril.

There is no body of material from this period so ripe for a redaction-critical analysis as the records of the councils. The task was begun by Schwartz in his discussion of "publizistische Sammlungen", the collections of appended material, or what today might be called "background documentation", that appeared with conciliar records, but the task is far from being completed.[16] What is of importance here is the way in which material from such collections found its way into what came to be believed to be the official acts of a council. In particular, what is important here is the way that Cyril's *Third Letter to Nestorius*, containing his famous and controversial twelve anathemas and embodying his early christology in its most uncompromising form, found its way into official acts by the time of Justinian.

The record is murky, and it must be admitted that the issue needs more work, but some things seem clear. Cyril's *Third Letter to Nestorius* was read at the Council of Ephesus in 431 during the first session. Unlike what happened with his *Second Letter to Nestorius*, Cyril did not call for a vote approving the *Third Letter*, nor was any vote ever recorded. By contrast, there was a vote to solemnly accept the twelve anathemas at the Latrocinium held under Dioscorus in 449. No surprise there. At Chalcedon, which isolated Dioscorus and his followers, the *Third Letter* with its anathemas had no official status; preferring an inclusive and eirenic kind of cyrillianism, as

---

14 *M*. 86, col. 1849A–C.

15 On the argument here, see P.T.R. GRAY, "Neo-Chalcedonianism and the Tradition," *ByzF* 8, 1982, p. 66.

16 See, e.g., E. SCHWARTZ, *Publizistische Sammlungen zum acacianischen Schisma*, Munich 1934. The best account so far of the primary and secondary literature is to be found in A. GRILLMEIER, *Christ in Christian Tradition* II, 1, trans. P. ALLEN & J. CAWTE, London & Oxford 1987, pp. 26–29.

has been said, Chalcedon included the *Third Letter* only as part of the background documentation. Between Chalcedon and Constantinople II, however, by a process not clearly documented, but whose general tendency should not seem unfamiliar to anyone who has followed the present discussion carefully, it became generally accepted that the anathemas did form part of Ephesus' official pronouncements. Thus the *Third Letter* moved from the background documentation to the "acts". Since that seems to have happened before the age of Justinian, though, it is not a direct part of our argument.

What does directly concern us is Justinian's startling assertion in his *Letter on the Three Chapters* (usually dated to 549) that: "St. Celestine, the first Synod of Ephesus, St. Leo and the holy Synod of Chalcedon all received and confirmed St. Cyril's chapters [anathemas] as they were and none of them sought any explanation."[17] Not one of the assertions made here is supported by historical evidence, yet all are made as assertions of historical fact! Thereby an authoritative central place is given to Cyril's explicit and exclusive christology at an imagined Chalcedon, significantly narrowing the range of beliefs that could be called chalcedonian. Cyril is being put into Chalcedon.

Is there any evidence that Justinian is repressing an awareness of the fact that he is reconstructing the past? There is. That awareness is implied a few pages earlier in the letter when Justinian is making a blistering attack on a Western synod that has defended one of the "Three Chapters", Ibas of Edessa's letter to Maris the Persian, for its criticism of Pope Celestine's approval of Cyril's faith as his faith. "Whoever says that the Twelve Chapters of St. Cyril are contrary to the true faith condemns not only St. Cyril, Celestine of blessed memory, and the first Council of Ephesus, but also the Council of Chalcedon which looked to Cyril as its father and teacher, as well as St. Leo, Pope of Rome, who, when he wrote to the Synod in Chalcedon, said of St. Cyril's Twelve Chapters: 'Let the definition [of faith] that Cyril of holy memory sent to Nestorius stand firm.'"[18] This shows that Justinian half knows that, apart from the supposition he might have inherited from an earlier period that the twelve chapters were approved at Ephesus, the twelve chapters were *not* included in the official acts of Chalcedon, since he has to

---

17 JUSTINIAN, *A Letter*, p. 146. The same approach was to be taken by the Fifth Council, which asserted that: "The holy synod of Chalcedon receives in writing Cyril of sacred memory, father and teacher, and accepts as synodical his letters, in one of which the twelve chapters are included...." (*ACO* IV, 1, p. 178; cf. pp. 160–166).

18 JUSTINIAN, *A Letter*, p. 144.

make an entirely circumstantial case arguing that approval for Cyril must have implied approval of his anathemas. You cannot have inclusion in the acts and an argument to suggest implied approval at the same time without there being some doublethink going on![19]

The fact is that here, as in the case of Leontius of Jerusalem, our writer has forgery on his mind: determined to dismiss Ibas' letter as a forgery, he himself reconstructs Chalcedon — without letting himself be fully aware, but without being totally unaware either, that he is doing so — to help him dismiss the allegedly forged (but actually genuine) letter of Ibas on the grounds that it is incompatible with the alleged stance (actually reconstructed) of Chalcedon!

Excision of the Antiochene tradition from Chalcedon was the object of the proceedings that led to the condemnation of the so-called "Three Chapters" (the person and work of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Letter of Ibas already mentioned, and the writings of Theodoret against Cyril of Alexandria) first by imperial edict and then by the Fifth Council, thereby enabling the followers of Chalcedon to present themselves more plausibly as exclusively cyrillian.

The case of Theodoret presents little of interest. As might be expected, where Chalcedon had required only that Theodoret disown Nestorius before it let him take his seat, the Fifth Council read that as meaning that he disowned his opposition to Cyril and even accepted his anathemas, a view entirely compatible with the vision it espoused of an exclusively cyrillian Chalcedon,[20] though not with anything we know of Theodoret. There is none of the telltale talk of forgery, and elaboration of "evidence" here that suggests a repressed consciousness of the reconstruction taking place, though it cannot be ruled out.

The case of Ibas' letter presented great difficulties for the age of Justinian, as we have said, since the letter received by Chalcedon was openly critical of Cyril and in favour of Antiochene christology. The approach taken was to argue that such a letter was in such great contrast with what Chalcedon stood for (as the age of Justinian conceived it, of course) that it could not be the letter actually meant by Chalcedon. Either it was a forgery, or it had been

---

19 Later in the letter he adds two more bits of circumstantial "evidence": that the condemnation of Domnus of Antioch, allegedly for merely urging silence on the twelve anathemas, was upheld by Chalcedon (p. 153), and that Theodoret was received at Chalcedon only when he accepted the twelve anathemas (p. 154). It is in the nature of things here that, in fact, neither piece of evidence is historically true.

20 See n. 17.

confused with some now lost letter much more compatible with cyrillian thinking which was really the letter approved by Chalcedon. To achieve this reconstruction, no avenue is left unexplored: the text of the letter is examined in detail; contemporary references to Ibas' theological position are cited; much is made of Ibas' own claim that he said nothing against Cyril after the union between Cyril and John of Antioch in 433, the basis for a *prima facie* case that the letter could not be by Ibas, since it seems to have been written after 433; some reference is made to the second session of Chalcedon which, it is claimed, in principle agreed to the condemnation of the letter when it agreed with the earlier judgment of Photius of Tyre and Eustathius of Beirut against Ibas — more evidence that it could not have been received by Chalcedon, which would hardly, they said, have received the same letter it condemned; most of all, a case is built up for the incompatibility of the letter with the supposed character of Chalcedon through a side-by-side, point-by-point comparison.[21]

In none of this is there anything, again, that reveals unmistakably the kind of double movement that we are looking for. There is, certainly, the reluctance of the more cautious members of the council to accept the reconstruction without minute examination of the records of Ephesus and Chalcedon.[22] They are uneasy about what is happening. Perhaps it is significant that the leaders of the council present so many different arguments, arguments well-prepared beforehand by an inner circle, as is revealed by their appearance in Justinian's earlier letter on the subject.[23] In that letter, interestingly enough, there is an exaggerated tone to the charge against Westerners that they are distorting the evidence, a tone that suggests once again that projection may be involved. Though it may be possible to suggest that the leaders are intentionally and without illusion remaking history, the more probable interpretation is that, again, we have to do with the double movement, here marked by the most extreme tension precisely because the reconstruction is so difficult to achieve without the awareness becoming completely conscious that reconstruction, not restoration of the past is what is being achieved.

The most interesting example has, of course, been saved for the last: the process by which Theodore of Mopsuestia was written out of the tradition along with the venerable antiochene tradition of christology, all in the name of Chalcedon's supposed exclusive cyrillianism.

---

21 See the record of the sixth session, *ACO* IV, 1, pp. 138–182.

22 Ibid., pp. 146–147.

23 There is much in the *Letter on the Three Chapters* that lays down the lines to be taken at the Fifth Council.

Here is how the process took place, as the records of session 5 of the Fifth Council show. On May 23, 550, Justinian sent letters to John, Metropolitan of Cilicia II, to Marthianus, the *comes domesticorum* and a *magnificus*, and to Cosmas the bishop of Mopsuestia itself. The letter asked them to inaugurate official proceedings to discover when the name of Theodore had been removed from the diptychs in the city of which he had been bishop, and whose name had been put in his place. "If [the senior lay people and the clergy] do not remember as to the time when this was accomplished, they are to confess this, that they do not know of the name of Theodore being included on the diptychs or being read out in the church. Therefore these same holy diptychs are to be produced, so that all the most religious bishops may know in what order the names of bishops on the diptychs are recited...."[24] They complied with the request, holding the required proceedings in Mopsuestia with all the pomp and solemnity they could muster. The senior persons present were examined; none of them could remember a time when Theodore's name had been recited from the diptychs.[25] The bishops examined the diptychs themselves and found something astonishing: where Theodore's name could have been expected, they found instead "'Cyril' written together with the saints who have gone to God, though no Cyril was ever bishop of the city."[26] "Cyril ... of holy memory bishop of the great city of Alexandria", they discovered with delight, "is inserted in [Theodore's] place!"[27]

The records of this charade, duly signed by all the bishops and attendant notables, and accompanied by all the background documents, were solemnly submitted to the Fifth Council and read into its acts. The conclusion: far from being approved implicitly or explicitly by anyone championing Chalcedon, Theodore of Mopsuestia and the ideas he represented had not been a part of the central, chalcedonian tradition within living memory, and what the tradition had stood for, for as long as anyone could say, was the position of Cyril of Alexandria.

Evidently a major piece of reconstruction of the past had taken place. Not only are the telltale signs there of the double movement in the tension

---

24 *ACO* IV, 1, p. 117, lines 28–32.

25 As the archdeacon Diodore said in presenting a summary of the acts of the proceedings at Mopsuestia for the Fifth Council, it became apparent from these statements "that from ancient times the name of Theodore was removed from the holy diptychs..." (ibid., p. 116, lines 14–16). Statements by clerics are recorded: p. 122, line 21–125, line 33. Statements by laypersons are recorded: p. 126, line 1–128, line 6.

26 Ibid., p. 116, lines 20–22.

27 Ibid., p. 116, lines 17–18.

involved, and the elaborate insistence on process and documentation. This time the movement itself is unmistakable. Justinian's letters asked, not, *whether*, but *when* Theodore's name was removed; not *whether* Theodore's name was replaced by someone else's, but by *whose* name it was replaced. It was an invitation to the Mopsuestians to prepare the ground: to suborn a few senior citizens who would swear that they had never heard Theodore's name recited and to insert another name in its place — and how inspired of them to make it the name of Cyril! All of this could be done while, at the very same time, neither Justinian nor the Fifth Council would ever have to be consciously aware of the reconstruction. The writers of the letter — Justinian and his inner circle of theological advisers, no doubt — could convince themselves, even, that their letter had been merely an inquiry about the state of things in Mopsuestia *vis-à-vis* Theodore's name. Best of all, there would be all the self-deceiving power of the solemn ceremony and oath-swearing and witnessing and recording of proceedings to attest that what was discovered at Mopsuestia was no more than the simple truth that Theodore had never been in the tradition, that the tradition had always been cyrillian.

Can we be sure, though, that the commission was not uncovering a rewriting of the record of long standing when it discovered what it discovered in Mopsuestia? Can we be sure, that is, that there had been the *recent* reconstruction we have alleged? We can. It is not just that it is inherently implausible that the name of Theodore, which we know was reverenced in some quarters in the age of Justinian, would not have been reverenced in his home town. We have something more: when the commission was examining the diptychs, the records of the proceedings show, it did discover the name "Theodore" on them, but in the second to last place in the list.[28] As many of the elderly witnesses pointed out in their testimony, "the one who is named Theodore on the diptychs is [a bishop] who died three years ago, and was from Galatia".[29] Would it have been possible, one asks oneself, for a city which had actually treated the name of Theodore of Mopsuestia as anathema for generations, and which had long ago actually expunged his name from the diptychs, and replaced it with the name of his doctrinal nemesis, to elect a successor who bore the identical title, "Theodore of Mopsuestia"? As well imagine Constantinople electing a bishop "Nestorius" again, or Alexandria a bishop "Arius"! Unintentionally, the

---

28 Ibid., p. 121, lines 28–35. The three diptychs had identical lists of thirteen bishops, with "Cyril" in the fourth place, and "Theodore" in the twelfth place.

29 The sample text is from the testimony of the presbyter Olympius, ibid., p. 123, lines 26–27.

records have shown us that Theodore of Mopsuestia was held in high esteem in his native city until the turn of events signalled by the move to condemn the Three Chapters required of Mopsuestia the clandestine destruction of its real past so that the age at large could both have a reconstructed past and conceal from itself the truth about that reconstruction, and so proceed serenely to demand conformity to a past that, though it had never existed, fitted its image of what the past ought to have been like, and therefore must have been like.

It seems, then, that on the three matters of the reconstruction of Cyril as a consistent chalcedonian, the reconstructing of Chalcedon as strictly cyrillian, and the excising of the antiochene tradition from the orthodox mainstream, the double movement can be seen at work exactly as the image of the covering of Noah's nakedness would suggest. The age was, as is the human wont, reconstructing the past while denying to itself that it was doing so. Thanks to the backward dance of these latter-day sons of Noah, it was largely the patristic past as reconstructed by the age of Justinian and preserved in the highly selective form of its florilegia[30] which would be authoritative for succeeding ages, and not the much more diverse and problematic past revealed in the original writings *in extenso* of the fathers.

---

30 Evidently the creation of florilegia in itself is a potent form of reconstruction. The enormous project of research required to demonstrate the import and effect of the massive efflorescence of florilegia in this period remains to be done.

THE ROLE OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH IN THE TRANSFIGURATION MOSAICS AT SINAI AND CLASSE

Christine Milner / University of Melbourne

The Transfiguration of Christ forms the iconographic focus of two important apse mosaics belonging to the later years of Justinian's reign: one in St. Catherine's monastery church at Sinai, the other at S. Apollinare in Classe, just outside Ravenna. The Classe mosaic is dated to between 546 and 549, and so belongs to a period of (somewhat shaky) Byzantine dominance in Ravenna, when the orthodox archbishop Maximian, personally appointed by Justinian, held the reins of ecclesiastical power. The apse mosaic at Sinai is dated to between 548 and 565, and the iconographic programme here is likely to reflect the direct influence of Justinian, as the monastery was an imperial foundation.

The two mosaics, then, are very close in date — perhaps even exactly contemporary — but they are separated widely, both in location and in iconography. The Sinai Transfiguration is much more literal in its interpretation, although not entirely so: for example, the traditional setting for the event, on the top of Mount Tabor, is barely suggested.[1] There may have existed many other monumental images of the Transfiguration, from around this time. We know for certain of only a handful, including one at the Eufrasian basilica at Porec, dating from about 550.[2] But the subject of the Transfiguration does not seem to have continued as a choice for apse mosaics, although it endured in church decoration as one of the repertoire of smaller festival icons.

---

1 For discussion of this last point, see esp. K. WEITZMANN, "Introduction to the Mosaics and Monumental Paintings," in G.H. FORSYTH & K. WEITZMANN, with I. SEVCENKO & F. ANDEREGG, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Church and Fortress of Justinian*, Ann Arbor 1973, p. 14; E. KITZINGER, *Byzantine Art in the Making: Main Lines of Stylistic Development in Mediterranean Art, 3rd - 7th Century*, London 1977, pp. 99–100; W.C. LOERKE, "'Real Presence' in Early Christian Art," in T.G. VERDON (ed.), *Monasticism and the Arts*, Syracuse 1984, p. 47.

2 J. BECKWITH, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, Harmondsworth 1970, p. 55. See also, for further examples, A. GRABAR, *Martyrium: Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, Paris 1946, II, p. 193 (with earlier references).

Scholarly opinion to date has suggested a number of possible reasons for the apparent popularity of the subject in the mid-sixth century. Obviously there will be no simple answer, particularly in the case of apse-decoration, with its complex liturgical agenda. Summarised briefly, the main reasons so far advanced for the choice of the Transfiguration, are these:

(1) As an affirmation of the Chalcedonian doctrine of the Two Natures of Christ, at a time when refutation of heresy, and promotion of orthodoxy, was of particular concern to the emperor;[3]
(2) as a eucharistic reference, which was always part of the central meaning of an apse mosaic;[4]
(3) as a depiction of theophany.[5] It has often been noted that Mount Sinai, like Mount Tabor, is a theophany site. The argument for local relevance is, however, applicable only to Sinai; at Classe, the aspect of theophany has been interpreted more as an abstract theological theme;
(4) as an expression, at Sinai, of monastic ideals;[6]
(5) as an eschatological reference.

All these aspects are inter-connected, and each is part of the total picture; each is thus involved in the motivation for the choice of subject and design. The fifth aspect — that of eschatology — is the one on which I want to concentrate here. I will begin by noting briefly what has already been said about this in the major scholarly discussions.

In relation to the Sinai apse, Weitzmann has argued as evidence of apocalyptic content that a close link existed in Christian theology between the Transfiguration of Christ and his Second Coming. In support, he quotes from a sermon of John Chrysostom:

---

3 K. WEITZMANN, "The Mosaic in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai," *PAPS* 110.6, 1966, reprinted in *Studies in the Arts at Sinai*, Princeton 1982, pp. 14–16.

4 See, for example, O.G. von SIMSON, *Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna*, Chicago 1948, p. 47, who notes, in his discussion of the Classe apse, that the Greek word "metamorphosis" referred equally to the Transfiguration and to the change in the Eucharist at its consecration.

5 See GRABAR, *Martyrium*, II, esp. pp. 165–167, 191–197; WEITZMANN, "Mosaics," in FORSYTH & WEITZMANN, *Church and Fortress*, p. 15; LOERKE, "Real Presence," p. 45.

6 This aspect is particularly stressed by LOERKE, "Real Presence," pp. 46–48. See also G.H. FORSYTH, "The Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Church and Fortress of Justinian," *DOP* 22, 1968, p. 14.

> Hereafter, he shall come in the very glory of the Father; not with Moses and Elijah only, but with the infinite host of the angels ... not with a cloud over his head, but with heaven surrounding him.[7]

This comparison of the Transfiguration and the Second Coming, however, relates the two events as much by their differences as by their similarities. Weitzmann's further suggestion that the omission of landscape elements in the Sinai Transfiguration may indicate a reference to the Second Coming,[8] has been queried by Kitzinger, who argues that this was probably a stylistic choice.[9]

Loerke has argued that the radiant mandorla, surrounding the figure of Christ in the Sinai apse, can suggest not only the glory of the Transfiguration but also that of the Second Coming.[10] He has also stated that the huge cross of the Classe apse, and the much smaller cross, and the lamb, in the Sinai apse, possess an eschatological dimension, because of the eternal validity of Christ's sacrifice.[11] Whilst this is perfectly true, the problem with the cross and the lamb (and even, to a lesser extent, the mandorla) is that because they pertain to the person of Christ, their iconographic symbolism is timeless and universal, rather than specific to the apocalypse. It is like saying that *any* figure or symbol of Christ in an apse includes a reference to his Second Coming: this would be true, but not specific.

All these suggestions are of course important ones. What I would like to do now is to take the argument one step further, by focusing on particular elements of the iconography that have not so far been considered as evidence of apocalyptic content. I would suggest that these elements represent an unequivocal and quite specific reference to the Last Days and the Second Coming, and more particularly to the troubled times which immediately precede the Second Coming. I then want to propose this reading as allowing for possible reference to contemporary events and preoccupations within the Byzantine Empire.

---

7 See WEITZMANN, "The Arts," in J. GALEY, *Sinai and the Monastery of St. Catherine*, London & Israel 1980, p. 84.

8 WEITZMANN, "Mosaics," in FORSYTH & WEITZMANN, *Church and Fortress*, p. 14.

9 KITZINGER, *Byzantine Art*, p. 100.

10 LOERKE, "Observations on the Representation of 'Doxa' in the Mosaics of S.Maria Maggiore, Rome, and St. Catherine's, Sinai," *Gesta* 20(1), 1981, p. 16.

11 LOERKE, "Real Presence," pp. 44–46.

To begin with, we will go back to the third aspect noted above. that of theophany. As we saw briefly just now, scholars have emphasised that Mount Sinai, like Mount Tabor, is a theophany site; and they have particularly stressed the importance of Moses in this regard. The design of the upper east wall of the Sinai apse brings out this point quite clearly: in the top left mosaic panel, Moses takes off his sandals before the Presence of God in the Burning Bush; and in the corresponding panel on the right-hand side, he receives the Law directly from the Hand of God.[12] So when he appears again in the main mosaic as a witness to the theophany of the Transfiguration, Moses seems more than just an extra, as it were, in the drama. He brings with him a historical relevance to the actual site of the Sinai church, as well as to the theme of theophany.

Scholarly discussion to date has concentrated on Moses, almost to the total exclusion of the other heavenly witness to the Transfiguration, the prophet Elijah. Analysis of Elijah's role, beyond that of witness to the Transfiguration, has virtually been limited to the observation that he also has a local relevance at Sinai, because he too was witness to a theophany there; and in fact there was a small chapel at Sinai, further up the mountain slope than the site of the monastery, that was dedicated to the prophet Elijah. This was visited and remarked on by pilgrims from the late fourth century on.[13]

---

12 The fine distinction between Sinai and Horeb is not particularly relevant to this discussion. For the sake of accuracy, it should however be noted that the episode of the Burning Bush (Exodus 3: 1–5), and that of Elijah's experience in the cave (I Kings 19: 8–18), both occurred at Mount Horeb, whereas Mount Sinai was the place at which Moses received the Law (Exodus 19: 16–25; 20: 1–21). The distinction was often blurred in early Christian times: see for example the comment by Jerome, who decided that Sinai and Horeb must be a single mountain which has two names: *Liber locorum*, 173.15f., ed. E. KLOSTERMAN, GCS. (Eusebius III, 1), Leipzig-Berlin 1904. It is possible that local Christians were more aware of the fine difference: see the discussion of the Sinai apse by LOERKE, "Real Presence," p. 45; on the other hand, the location of Justinian's enlarged and fortified monastery at the traditional site of the Burning Bush seems from its earliest days to have been described as "Sinai" and not "Horeb": cf. PROCOPIUS, *Aedificia*, V, 8, 1–9, in *Opera*, IV, ed. J. HAURY, Leipzig 1905–13, rev. G. WIRTH, Leipzig 1962–64 (although Procopius notes that this was built not on the top of the mountain, but at its foot). See also the note on Horeb in J. WILKINSON, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, Warminster 1977, p. 159.

13 *Itinerarium Egeriae*, IV, 1–3, ed. E. FRANCESCHINI & R. WEBER, CSL 175, Turnhout 1965 (trans. J. WILKINSON, *Egeria's Travels to the Holy Land*, rev. ed., Jerusalem 1981); unlike the site of the Burning Bush (*Itin. Eg.*, IV, 6–8), the location of Elijah's cave is here specified as "Horeb".

The pilgrim Egeria, who visited the traditional site of the event around the year 380, reported that the appropriate passage from the Book of Kings was read out aloud at the entrance to Elijah's cave by the monks who accompanied her to the spot. Quite possibly this passage was a regular inclusion in the local liturgy at Sinai.

It seems appropriate, then, to investigate further the role of Elijah in the Transfiguration mosaic at Sinai (and also, to a lesser extent, in the Classe mosaic), and to try to define what exactly his function is within the iconography. The simple answer, of course, is that he needs to be included in a Transfiguration image. But is he just an "extra" in the drama — important, but relatively passive? Or does he bring to the iconography a further dimension of meaning, which adds not only to its complexity, but perhaps also to its contemporary relevance?

In defining the role of Elijah here, we need to take into account both the biblical sources, and also contemporary Byzantine beliefs about him. According to the Book of Kings, Elijah had been one of the more spectacular of the Hebrew prophets. He had been able to call down fire from heaven, to stop the rain falling, or to bring it back again. He had even brought a dead child back to life. Elijah's ascetic mode of life, and his fiery political involvement with the rulers of Israel, provided, by the sixth century A.D., a role model for the more ambitious of the Byzantine holy men. But Elijah was a hard act to follow, particularly in the manner of his departure from the earth. From at least the early fourth century on, the site near the river Jordan, from which his fiery chariot had taken off, was pointed out to successive generations of pilgrims.[14]

The prophet Elijah also features prominently in the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition, where he is named as one of the Two Witnesses, those strange prophetic figures who appear suddenly in the Last Days, sent by God to herald Christ's return to earth, to warn men and women of the impending Judgement, and to oppose the Antichrist.[15] To the contemporary viewers of these apse mosaics, then, as to those who devised their programmes, the presence of Elijah — even if his more overt role here is relatively passive —

---

14 The earliest extant reference occurs in the account by the Bordeaux Pilgrim (c. A.D. 333), *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, 598, 3, ed. P. GEYER & O. CUNTZ, CSL 175. See also the discussion of "Jordan" by WILKINSON, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, p. 162.

15 The biblical reference is Revelation 11: 3–13; although here, it is the Beast (v.7), rather than the Antichrist, who opposes and slays the Two Witnesses. The Antichrist does not in fact feature at all in Revelation — and only in a somewhat abstract sense in the Epistle of John — but he is always the chief embodiment of evil in the later apocalyptic literature.

would have called to mind also his active and vital eschatological role. Visual images function on a complex level, and this is particularly true of the main figures in an apse mosaic. They are not simply actors in a narrative or part of the scenery, but exist also in their own right; and just as they bring their own names along with them, they also bring along the baggage of their own personal mythology. They come, in a sense, as a "package deal". So the figure of Elijah, particularly when as here it exists in iconographic conjunction with an image of Christ in glory, inevitably carries with it multiple agenda, which have as much to do with the future as with the past.

Elijah's role as a major protagonist in the cataclysmic events of the Last Days was well established in Byzantine tradition by the early sixth century. It was defined in part by reference to the gospel accounts of the Transfiguration,[16] particularly where they establish a parallel — so close as to be virtually an identification — between Elijah and John the Baptist.[17] The parallel between the two prophets consists chiefly in their both being forerunners: John as forerunner of the first Advent, and Elijah as forerunner of the second.[18] This parallel was emphasised by Romanos in his kontakion *On the Second Coming*:

> John was the forerunner of the former arrival of our God,
> as he announced repentance for all.
> Elijah, the just, will be the forerunner of the Second Coming.[19]

Romanos sets this within the context of Matthew's account of the Transfiguration, in which the roles of Elijah and John are paired, or identified, and he also reinforces the point by quoting from Malachi's prophecy that Elijah will be sent by God to warn men of the imminent Judgement Day.[20]

---

16 MATTHEW 17: 1–13; MARK 9: 2–13; LUKE 9: 28–36.

17 MATTHEW 17: 10–13; MARK 9: 11–13.

18 Many further links were drawn between John and Elijah: for example, the traditional site of Christ's baptism in the Jordan was directly opposite the site of Elijah's ascension: cf. BORDEAUX, *Itin.*, 598, 1–3; and see the discussion by WILKINSON, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, p. 162. Romanos draws a parallel between Herodias' desire to destroy John, and Jezebel's similar intentions towards Elijah: *On the Beheading of John the Baptist*, k. 38, str. 5, ed. P. MAAS & C.A. TRYPANIS, *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica Genuina*, Oxford 1963, p. 296 (this edition will be referred to throughout as "O").

19 ROMANOS, *On the Second Coming*, O k.34, str. 4, p. 267; trans. M. CARPENTER, *Kontakia of Romanos, Byzantine Melodist*, Columbia 1970, p. 373 (this translation will be used throughout).

20 MALACHI 4, 5–6; ROMANOS, O k.34, str. 4, p. 268.

The iconographic arrangement of the Sinai apse places a medallion portrait of John the Baptist in the left spandrel of the triumphal arch, in very close proximity to the figure of Elijah in the conch of the apse. The deliberate juxtaposition of these two images has already been noted by Loerke, who sees the main purpose of this visual link as consisting in the fact that both Elijah and John the Baptist were models of ascetic monasticism[21] — no doubt a highly significant aspect of the parallel between the two prophets, particularly in the context of a monastery. Loerke also notes that the gospel story of the Transfiguration draws a parallel between John and Elijah, but he interprets this as applying to the *first* Advent, and does not argue for any specific eschatological significance in the juxtaposition of the two figures.[22]

I would like to suggest however that the arrangement here is almost a visual equivalent of those lines in Romanos' apocalyptic hymn — in which, quite clearly, Elijah's role as forerunner belongs to the *second* Advent.[23] I would further suggest that the likeness between the faces of the two forerunners is quite remarkable — not only in their expression, but in their actual features: the two prophets could be brothers, or father and son.[24] The main purpose of this juxtaposition and facial similarity, I would argue, is to stress the role of Elijah as forerunner — that is, of the Second Coming — and so to emphasise his role as one of the Two Witnesses who challenge the Antichrist. In making this point, the iconographic arrangement of the Sinai apse greatly empowers the figure of Elijah: his presence is significant, not just because of the historical Sinai association; not just because he has to be included in a Transfiguration image; not just because he provides a role model for the monastic community; but primarily because, within his own

---

21 LOERKE, "Real Presence," p. 45.

22 Ibid., p. 45.

23 ROMANOS, *On the Second Coming*, O k.34, str. 4 (quoted above). MATTHEW 17: 10–13 in fact allows for a dual interpretation of Elijah's return, as both a past — if recent — event (in the person of John), and a future, eschatological one, but Romanos here chooses to emphasise the latter meaning.

24 The best illustrations are in FORSYTH & WEITZMANN, *Church and Fortress*, Plates CVIII, CXXIV. In a study presented at the Art Association of Australia 1993 Annual Conference, I examined this facial similarity in detail, and compared these two faces with the other "portraits" in the apse, noting that among all forty-one of them, only that of Malachi — the one prophet who foretold the eschatological role of Elijah — bears any close affinity.

person, he functions as a direct link between the Transfiguration theme and that of the Second Coming.

Romanos' kontakion *On the Second Coming* makes reference also to the passage in Revelation describing the Two Witnesses. The biblical text does not in fact identify either of these witnesses by name, but Romanos conforms to contemporary Byzantine tradition in asserting that: "John, the theologian ... clearly taught and made clear in his Apocalypse that Elijah would come."[25] We might note in passing that this same apostle — John the Theologian — keeps company with Elijah in the left quadrant of the conch mosaic. The same hymn states also that Elijah is to be accompanied by Enoch, the other Witness, although Romanos appears to assign him a secondary role: "Also he revealed that Enoch, the blessed, would come with him."[26]

The only biblical "source" for Enoch in this role is in the Epistle of Jude, where Enoch is named as prophesying the Second Coming and the Judgement,[27] but Byzantine tradition paired him with Elijah as one of the two apocalyptic prophets.[28] Elijah and Enoch were the only two recorded biblical personages who had never experienced death — instead being translated.[29] Presumably a man could not die twice, and the Two Witnesses are to be slain by the Antichrist during the Last Days. The Byzantine apocalyptic text known as *Pseudo-Ephraem* preserved the tradition that Elijah and Enoch had been spared from death so they could announce Christ's Second Coming and denounce the Antichrist.[30] Sixth-century Byzantine awareness of the peculiar status of Elijah and Enoch is indicated in another Romanos kontakion, *On the Ascension*.[31] Here Romanos contrasts the lesser ascensions (or translations) of Elijah and Enoch from the earth — but

---

25 O k.34; str. 5, p. 268; trans. CARPENTER, p. 373.

26 Loc. cit.

27 JUDE 14–15; this is a reference to the Jewish pseudepigraphical text, I ENOCH 1: 9 (see the discussion in F.L. CROSS & E.A. LIVINGSTONE (edd.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 2nd ed., London 1974, pp. 459–460).

28 For listing and discussion of the many references in Byzantine texts to the mission of Elijah and Enoch, see P.J. ALEXANDER, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, ed. D. de F. ABRAHAMSE, Berkeley 1985.

29 Genesis 5: 24; II Kings 2: 1–18; see also Hebrews 11: 5.

30 *Pseudo-Ephraem*, ed. C.P. CASPARI, *Briefe, Abhandlungen und Predigten aus den letzten zwei Jahrhunderten des kirchliche Alterthums und dem Anfang des Mittelalters*, Christiana 1890, p. 219.8; see ALEXANDER, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp. 139–140, 212 and n. 88, and, for the dating of this composite work, 144–147.

31 O k.32, str.14, pp. 256–257.

not, he stresses, to heaven — with Christ's true ascension to heaven. The content of this is paralleled in a homily, attributed to Athanasius, but probably by Basil of Seleucia.[32]

The early sixth century *Oracle of Baalbek*, which describes the Antichrist as the "emperor with the changing shape",[33] tells how, following the slaying of Elijah and Enoch by the Antichrist, the crucified Jesus will come from heaven like a great and shining luminary and will revive them and destroy the Antichrist and his entire host.[34] This description of the returning Christ, radiating light, indicates how visually appropriate an image of the Transfiguration was to suggest the Second Coming — quite apart from any theological links.[35] Both the Sinai and Classe Transfiguration mosaics could be seen as expressing this idea: at Sinai, Christ appears in luminous white robes, in a radiant mandorla, while at Classe, the huge jewelled cross, bearing the face and title of Christ, is surrounded by the stars and the blue of heaven.

The Classe apse does not make the analogy between Elijah and John the Baptist explicit in the way the Sinai arrangement does with its juxtaposition of the two images. But the figure of Elijah in the Classe mosaic does not need to be reinforced by an image of John the Baptist in order to possess its "forerunner" — and hence apocalyptic witness — title. The mere fact that Elijah is depicted in the context of the Transfiguration would be sufficient to establish the link, because the parallel between the two forerunners is an integral part of the Transfiguration story in the gospel. In fact it constitutes the only explanation of the event given by Christ to the three apostles who witness the Transfiguration, and who then enquire — in a clear reference to Judaic eschatological tradition — about the meaning of Elijah's appearance there. In that sense, every Transfiguration image could be said to include specific apocalyptic reference, and it does so, in large part, through the person of the prophet Elijah. What the Sinai apse, in particular, demonstrates is that the connection between Elijah and John the Baptist, deriving from the biblical sources, and stressed in early sixth century Byzantine hymnography, had — at least by the mid-century — also come to be emphasised in Byzantine iconography.

---

32 ATHANASIUS (spuria), *Sermo in Assumptionem Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*, PG 28, 1097. See also CARPENTER, *Romanos*, pp. 347–348.

33 *Oracle of Baalbek*, line 191, ed. & tr. P.J. ALEXANDER, *The Oracle of Baalbek: The Tiburtine Sibyl in Greek Dress*, Washington D.C. 1967; see also ALEXANDER, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 211.

34 *Baalbek*, lines 217–221 (the paraphrase is that of ALEXANDER, *Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 211).

35 A point made by Loerke (as in n. 10).

Having argued that these mosaics contain unequivocal reference to the Last Days and the Second Coming, I would like in the final part of this discussion to propose a possible causal link between the choice of subject for the mosaics and contemporary Byzantine preoccupations with the apocalypse. In doing so, I am very conscious of my debt to the work already done by others: for example Rubin in the 1950s and 60s,[36] and Scott in the 1980s.[37]

It has been suggested by these scholars that certain aspects of the later years of Justinian's reign may have been interpreted by some contemporaries (for example Procopius) as evidence that Justinian was the Antichrist. Many people in the mid-sixth century were still preoccupied with the imminence of the Second Coming and the Last Judgement. It has been noted that the sixth century Byzantine concept of "fear" was ambivalent: fear could be viewed in either a negative or a positive light. Similarly, the plagues and other disasters of the later Justinianic period could be interpreted by contemporaries as having been caused either by an evil power (perhaps even the Antichrist) or by a good power — not only as a deserved punishment for sin, but also as a salutary warning to repent because the Judgement Day was at hand. No doubt Justinian would have preferred the latter interpretation.

These apse mosaics are both products of the later Justinianic period, and both (but more particularly the Sinai one) are closely associated with Justinian and his orthodox churchmen. I would like to suggest the possibility that their iconography makes deliberate use of the person of Elijah, in order to establish the view that contemporary disasters are brought about by those on the side of the good. The point here is that the prophetic role of the two apocalyptic witnesses involves far more than just preaching repentance. Their fight against the Antichrist is accompanied by widespread disasters and torments, of which they themselves are the agents.[38] The supernatural powers over rain and fire, which characterised Elijah's first sojourn on earth, have assumed cosmic proportions on his return during the Last Days. The litany of woes — fire, drought, plague, and earthquake, which the Two Witnesses call down upon an unrepentant earth — has a familiar ring in the mid-sixth century, being echoed almost word for word in

---

36 B. RUBIN, "Der Fürst der Dämonen," *BZ* 44, 1951, pp. 469–481; idem, *Das Zeitalter Iustinians*, Berlin 1960; idem, "Der Antichrist und die 'Apokalypse' des Prokopios von Kaisareia," *ZDMG* 110, 1961, pp. 55–63.

37 R.D. SCOTT, "Malalas, 'The Secret History', and Justinian's Propaganda," *DOP* 39 1985, pp. 99–109. See also, most recently, P. MAGDALINO, "The History of the Future and its Uses: Prophecy, Policy and Propaganda," in R. BEATON & C. ROUECHÉ (edd.), *The Making of Byzantine History, Studies Dedicated to Donald M. Nicol*, Aldershot 1993, ch. 1.

38 Revelation 11: 5–13.

contemporary Byzantine writings (whether favourable or unfavourable to Justinian).[39]

In the Book of Revelation, these woes and torments, lasting for three and a half years, are part of a divine plan to bring about repentance and belief in God while there is still time. An emperor desperately trying to establish religious conformity in the face of his empire's apparent disintegration, and amid widespread fears (or hopes) of the imminent end of the world, might have found in the prophet Elijah a suitable, if not quite a congenial, ally. At the very least, by suggesting a divine — and so ultimately beneficent — cause for all the empire's ills, Justinian and his orthodox bishops could have countered (without actually having to say so), any rumour or suspicion that this might have been indeed the reign of the dreaded "emperor with the changing shape".[40]

And if, as many sixth century Byzantines seem to have believed, the Apocalypse *was* just around the corner, then Elijah's apparently *future* role as a champion of God against the Antichrist, sheds its distant time-frame and becomes part of the here-and-now.[41] The Sinai and Classe apse mosaics appear in widely separated parts of the empire at a time of great political and religious insecurity. If these are indeed the Last Days, then the figure of Elijah empowers the present moment. Because in these Transfiguration images, Elijah does not simply converse with Christ on Mount Tabor, he also greets the Christ of the Apocalypse, whose return to earth he has prepared.

---

39 Cf. MALALAS, *Chronographia*, ed. L. DINDORF, Bonn 1831; trans. E.M. & M.J. JEFFREYS, R. SCOTT et al, *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, Melbourne 1986, Book 18, esp. pp. 92–128; PROCOPIUS, *Anecdota*, esp. 12, 14–17, 18, 36–45, in *Opera*, III, ed. HAURY, rev. WIRTH, 1963 (trans. G.A. WILLIAMSON, *The Secret History*, Harmondsworth 1966).

40 Cf. PROCOPIUS, *Anecdota*, esp. 12, 14–25.

41 This was probably particularly true for the monastic context of the Sinai mosaic: cf. Procopius' description of the Sinai monks' existence as "a careful rehearsal of death" (*Aedificia*, V, 8, 4). Discussing this point, Philip Rousseau has suggested to me that the monastic life was characterised by an intense and constant apocalyptic fervour.

VARIATIONS IN BYZANTINE IMPERIAL CEREMONIAL: THE *DE CEREMONIIS* OF CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS

Ann Moffatt / The Australian National University

Though attributed in its present form to the emperor Constantine Porphyrogennetos, or his editorial supervision, the *Book of Ceremonies* is a composite work built up over the centuries since Diocletian's reforms at the beginning of the fourth century.[1] The mid-tenth century work was a new attempt to codify imperial ceremonial on the basis of earlier compilations and past experience.[2] It contains, essentially, details for the emperor's attendance at religious festivals and at secular ceremonies like the appointment of government officials. These may be held either within the Palace, in its churches and reception rooms, or if outside, usually they involved the emperor going to the Hippodrome or churches elsewhere in Constantinople.

Besides the generalised prescriptions for these occasions there are references to specific events embedded in the text or appended as notes. These are most common in Book II. For example Book II, chapter 15, is headed: "What it is necessary to observe when a reception is held in the Great Triklinos of the Magnaura [Palace] when the rulers sit on the throne of Solomon."[3] This is the setting in which to receive a foreign ambassador. Once the procedures have been explained the specific arrangements are given for the receptions in Constantine's own time for Saracen ambassadors and for the Russian regent Olga and her entourage; these are given in splendid detail.

---

1 For an attempt to determine the dates of these layers, see J.B. BURY, "The Ceremonial Book of Constantine Porphyrogenitus," *EHR* 22, 1907, pp. 209–227, 417–439.

2 *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae*, ed., Latin trans. & comm. by J.J. REISKE, 2 vols., Leipzig 1751–54, reprinted CSHB, Bonn 1829–30, together with Reiske's previously unpublished commentary to Book II; preface to Book I. Book I, chapters 1–83 have also been edited, with trans. & comm., by A. VOGT, 4 vols., Paris 1935–40, 2nd ed. 1967. References here are to Reiske's text in the pagination of the Bonn edition [R] and to Reiske's chapter numbering. This pagination appears in the margin of Vogt's edition. Cross-references are given to Vogt's edition [V] citing it by volume and page number.

3 Most of this chapter has been translated by J. FEATHERSTONE in "Ol'ga's visit to Constantinople," *HUkSt* 14, 1990, pp. 293–312.

In other chapters attention is drawn to changes made to suit particular occasions or made since the time when that particular section was originally compiled.[4]

In addition to Constantine Porphyrogennetos' or his assistant's updating, writing and annotating, there are chapters taken directly, with acknowledgment, from the sixth-century book on state ceremonial compiled by Peter the Patrician in the time of Justinian.[5] Other chapters refer to the family of Herakleios and clearly date from the beginning of the seventh century.[6] Others are later, from the iconoclast period it seems, containing some titles from late antiquity, alongside new ones.[7] Not surprisingly there were more changes again after the triumph of Orthodoxy in the mid-ninth century, including customs attributed to the time of Michael III the Drunkard

---

4 For example, at the end of I, 10, it is noted that from the time of Leo VI the emperor went on horseback, instead of in a religious procession, to the Church of the Holy Apostles on the Monday of Renewal Week. A scholion to I, 16 records a "recent" change for the Sunday following Easter with the emperor going to the Church of the Holy Apostles on that day instead of to Hagia Sophia. This scholion updating the protocol appears to have been copied directly from an earlier text since already in A.D. 899 the emperor celebrated this feast at the Church of the Holy Apostles (I, 52, R773 = PHILOTHEOS, *Kletorologion*, ed. N. Oikonomides, *Les Listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*, Paris 1972, p. 209). At Book II, 15 (R594) there is a passing reference to the emperor riding to the Church of the Holy Apostles on both the Monday of Renewal Week and the Sunday after Easter. This part of the chapter certainly dates from the time of Constantine VII. The acclamations for both of these days (I, 5 for the Monday and I, 6 for the Sunday) also assume attendance at the Church of the Holy Apostles. There was a change of venue for the Wednesday of Mid-Pentecost, too, after the attempt in 903 to kill Leo VI in the Church of St Mokios; thereafter the feast was celebrated in the Church of the Holy Apostles (I, 7).

5 Book I, 84–95.

6 Book II, 27–30, 39.

7 For example, Chapter I, 47 on the appointment of a patrician-senator who serves as a *strategos*, contains a lot of terminology from late antiquity as well as a master of ceremonies. It is possible that Book I, chapters 43 and 44, on the appointment of a caesar and of a *nobelisimos*, are based on particular ceremonies in the reign of Constantine V from which the names have been removed in order to provide a more general protocol. In A.D. 769 Constantine, with his son Leo IV as co-emperor, appointed his next two sons as caesars and the fourth one a *nobelisimos*. The subsequent appointment, before Constantine's death in 775 of his fifth son as *nobelisimos* may in turn underlie chapter 44. See C. DIEHL, "Sur la date de quelques passages du *Livre des Cérémonies*," *REGr* 16, 1903, pp. 28–41.

and his successors Basil the Macedonian and Leo VI, Constantine's own father.[8] One clue Bury and others have used, with caution, in dating some of the chapters has been the reference to one or more emperors, as often there was a senior and a junior emperor, or sometimes to more than one empress.[9] One chapter even has a scholion saying that an item is "from another old book of ceremony (*taktikon*)".[10]

Of course over the centuries details of ceremonial changed. For example the two fountain-courts used as a ceremonial venue in the Palace by the Blues and the Greens in time became constricted, and towards the middle of the ninth century, c. A.D. 840, another fountain-court replaced them, built by Theophilos and associated with the Triconch.[11] Then one winter before Christmas, in the time of Michael III it in turn could not be used for the Broumalion festival because of strong winds and heavy snowfalls, and the celebration was held instead in the Triklinos of the Lausiakos.[12] New festivals were established like the Feast of Orthodoxy and the Feast for the Union of the Church at the end of the conflict over Leo's VI's fourth marriage, the marriage that legitimised the birth of Constantine Porphyrogennetos.[13] There was a new chapel honouring the empress St Theophano to be visited, a new cross, perhaps carried in processions, commissioned by Constantine Porphyrogennetos for the Church of the Theotokos of the Pharos, and a portrait (*eikon*) of the emperor Basil in the Nea Church to be revered.[14] A new throne in the Magnaura Palace was to

---

8 Book I, 31–37 (Michael III) and chapters 19–21 (Basil and Leo).

9 F. DOELGER cautioned against carrying this approach to extremes in his review of G. OSTROGORSKY & E. STEIN, "Die Krönungsordnungen des Zeremonienbuches. Chronologische und verfassungsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen," *Byz* 27, 1932, pp. 185–233 in *BZ* 36, 1936, pp. 145–157.

10 Book I, 29 (R161; V1,149).

11 The private fountain-court of the Triconch; J. EBERSOLT, *Le Grand Palais de Constantinople et le Livre des Cérémonies*, Paris 1910, pp. 100–103, 110–113; THEOPHANES CONTINUATUS, III, 43, ed. I. BEKKER, CSHB, Bonn 1838, pp. 141–142. Long before Constantine's day the old fountain-courts of the Blues and the Greens had become constricted (Book II, 21; R617) either before or because Basil had built a luxurious bath building over one and a church was built over the other (THEOPHANES CONT. V, 90, ed. BEKKER, p. 336).

12 Book II, 18 (R605).

13 Book I, 23 and 36.

14 For the chapel, see Book II, 7 (R537), the cross Book II, 40 (R640) and I, 32 (R174; V1,162), and for the portrait of Basil in the women's part of the Nea Church, built by Basil in the Palace and dedicated in A.D. 880, Book I, 19 (R118; V1,109) and 20 (R121; V1,112).

impress Liudprand when he came in 949 as a young ambassador from the Lombard court of Pavia, as it had mechanical birds that warbled and lions that rose up on their bases and roared when the organs sounded.[15]

Besides these changes of circumstance which took place over the centuries, there were also variations to suit particular situations. The acclamations, led by cheerleaders, with responses from the people, were appropriate to each specific occasion, whether in the Palace, the Hippodrome or the street, and were far more varied than, for example, modern football chants. And the hymns, or *troparia*, varied according to the church festival being celebrated. New ones introduced included those composed by Leo VI.[16] The ceremonies themselves had to be varied when movable feasts coincided with fixed feasts and they could then involve an extra change of ceremonial robes and an extra procession. The feast of the Annunciation, nine months before Christmas, was of obvious concern in this respect, coming around the busy time of Easter.[17]

The dress of the emperor and court varied to suit the occasion. For moving about, especially if it involved travelling on horseback, the more comfortable caftan-like belted *skaramangion* was worn, sometimes with the *sagion*, the riding cloak. Once he arrived at a church the emperor would withdraw behind a curtain in the narthex to change into his richly decorated formal *dibetesion* and chlamys, the long cloak such as we see Justinian wearing in the San Vitale mosaic in Ravenna. For the 12 days of Christmas members of the court wore brightly coloured and elaborately patterned chlamyses, but at Easter, the proconsuls and patricians, if they were not among the twelve who, like the emperor, wore the gold *loros*, put on white

---

15 In Book I, chapter 24 (R138; V1,128) it is noted as an aside that on 1 Jan. in indiction 3 the emperors sat on the newly constructed throne which replaced the one constructed for Theophilos which had been destroyed by Michael III. The correlation of the indiction with other information given in this chapter points to either A.D. 900 or 930. See CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. & trans. Gy. MORAVCSIK & R.J.H. JENKINS, Washington, 2nd ed. 1967, chapter 43; and *Commentary*, ed. R.J.H. JENKINS, London 1962, p. 163. G. BRETT, "The Automata in the Byzantine 'Throne of Solomon'," *Speculum* 29, 1954, pp. 477–487 suggested it was rebuilt for Constantine when he became senior emperor, but there was little time even for restoration if it was used on 1 Jan. 945, only two weeks after he assumed power.

16 Book I, 19 (R115; V1,106) and 21 (R123; V1,114–115).

17 For the feast of the Annunciation coinciding with Easter Sunday, see I, 9 (R71; V1,64), with the Monday of Renewal Week, the week after Easter, I, 10 (R85; V1,76), and with the Sunday of the middle week of Lent, I, 30 (R162–70; V1,151–157).

chlamyses with gold *tablia*.[18] If the emperor was not returning to the Palace until the afternoon he might choose to wear on the trip back a sleeveless *kolobion*.[19] This is well attested for the summer months. He might also wear crowns of different colours, red, white or green, a white one on the outward journey, say, and a red one homewards, or vice versa.[20] The dress of the rector was exceptional and presents a problem. His official "uniform" included a tunic with gold embroidered cuffs and a *maphorion*, a veil worn from head to foot, of purple silk embroidered with small roses in gold. In this case, uniquely, and one might ask why, the dress was worn only on the actual occasion of his appointment and not subsequently in processions.[21] Certainly the dress could be spectacular. Some of the *skaramangia* and chlamyses worn by the court were so magnificent that they were kept in various parts of the Palace, presumably on display, and were known by appropriate names like the "peacock", "octagon", "white lions", "horseman", "griffins", "plane tree", and "eagles", and they were sometimes strung up to decorate pergolas and reception rooms.[22]

While the focus is on the dignitaries of the emperor's court, there are references to the women dignitaries associated with the empress, the girdled patrician women and patrician women, the *protospathariai*, *spathariai*, proconsular women, *stratorissai*, *kometissai* and *kandidatissai*, *skribonissai* and *domestikissai*, *bestetorissai*, women of silentiary rank, and so on.[23] Though we hear little of them they seem to have had a distinct role. Judging from one passage about the appointment of *strategoi*-patricians, they acquired their office in parallel with their husband's appointment. When these officials had been appointed by the emperor in the Palace in the presence of the court and had kissed the knees and the feet of the emperor, they proceeded to Hagia Sophia where the patriarch prayed over their codicils and the

---

18 In Book I, 37 the garments and crowns worn by the emperor at various points on Easter Sunday are listed. Notes follow on the imperial dress for Renewal Week, for festivals in the Hippodrome, and for 19 other feast-days. For court dress from Christmas until the day before the Eve of Epiphany see I, 23 (R128; V1,119) and I, 25 (R142; V1,132) and for Easter Saturday, I, 47 (R242; V2,48) and Easter Sunday I, 1 (R24; V1,18–19).

19 Book I, 10 (R86; V1,77), I, 37 (R188; V1,176), and II, 13 (R561 and R563).

20 Book I, 37 (R187–188; V1,175–177).

21 Book II, 4 (R528–529).

22 Book I, 35 (R181; V1,169) and II, 15 (R571, 572, 576–581, 583, 587). Some of the curtains were similarly patterned and hung specially for display; see, for example, II, 15 (R589).

23 Book I, 9 (R67–68; V1,61), I, 49 (R203; V2,12), II, 15 (R596), and II, 21 (R618).

patrician appointed placed a purse on a portable altar there, a *strategos* -patrician leaving 72 *nomismata*, a salaried patrician 50 and an unsalaried one 30. After taking communion they were escorted back to their homes by the silentiaries who carried the codicils. It is at this point that his wife received her codicils, for we are told that, "if the patrician has a wife, the silentiary gives the codicils to the patrician woman and receives 12 *nomismata* from her; but if he does not have a wife, he places them on his bed and receives the 12 *nomismata* from him, and he dines with him and then retires to his own house".[24]

The most senior appointment for a woman was as a girdled patrician woman. The ceremony took place in the Palace, first in the Church of the Theotokos of the Pharos where she received the dalmatic, pectoral (*thorakion*) and veil (*maphorion*), and then, after she had put on the *loros* and the senatorial headdress, in the Chrysotriklinos. Here, like other patricians, she received the insignia of a patrician. The *praipositos* leads her in, guiding her by the shoulders, "and she makes obeisance a little, not being able to prostrate herself because of the *loros* and the headdress .... And she kisses the knees of the senior ruler and similarly of the junior ruler, but she does not kiss their feet, not being able to prostrate herself". On her way out of the Palace she was greeted by and petitioned by the factions, like any patrician, and she also went to Hagia Sophia to have the patriarch pray over her insignia of office. She went next to the Triklinos of the Magnaura where she was shown obeisance by the patrician women who received a gift from her of 6 *nomismata* each. Later, back in the Church of the Pharos, she placed a gift of 12 *nomismata* on the portable altar, lit candles and went out to her apartment, apparently within the Palace.[25]

An independent role is mentioned for the empress on several occasions. At the feast for Pentecost she sat in the gallery of Hagia Sophia and just as the patricians and others received the kiss from the emperor in the body of the church, she received the corresponding seven groups of women courtiers and gave them the kiss.[26] On Palm Sunday in the Chrysotriklinos the *orphanotrophos, sakellarios* and heads of the homes for the aged and the hospices and other church officials brought the emperor crosses, as symbols of the Passion, and he in turn gave these to the court officials. This account is followed by a note that the empress also received the church officials in the

---

24 Book I, 47 (R238–242; V2,46–48), a chapter probably compiled early in the iconoclast period; BURY, "The Ceremonial Book," *EHR* 22, 1907, pp. 431–432.

25 Book 1, 50 (R257–61; V2,63–66).

26 Book 1, 9 (R67; V1,61).

same way as the emperor and she, too, received the crosses from them.[27] Again when an empress is crowned, or at the double ceremony of the coronation and marriage of an empress, the role of the women of the court is spelled out because, like the men, they participated in their hierarchically arranged groups.[28] When the Russian regent Olga visited there were receptions provided first with the men and then with the women, and parallel banquets.[29]

To this point we have looked at the sort of changes which took place over centuries, like the introduction of new festivals, then at the variations from one ceremony to another to suit particular situations, requiring different acclamations, hymns and dress, and finally at some situations where the women had a role comparable to or parallel to that of the men of the court.

To conclude there are also situations where some genuine flexibility is written into the ceremonial where chance or the weather or the emperor's inclination might be a factor. Several festivals involved going out to the Church of the Theotokos at Blachernai near the land walls and the Golden Horn, or to the Church of the Theotokos at the Spring, close to the Marmara and just beyond the walls. If it was nice weather they would go by sea, if not, on horseback.[30] For the feast of the Annunciation there was a procession to the tiny chapel in the base of the column in the Forum of Constantine. Normally the patricians, the senate, the city regiments and the people had their places in the Forum. But there is a note that if it is windy weather they proceed along the colonnade and go into the senate house of the Forum where a portable altar is set up for the occasion.[31] In any case the emperor always had the prerogative to decide whether or not a full-scale ceremony involving the court was to be held. The *praipositos* would check with him a day in advance.[32] Chariot races, however traditional the occasion was, could not take place without him first issuing a permit.[33]

In the decoration for these festivities the seasons played a part. The street might be strewn with boxwood sawdust and ivy and laurel and myrtle and

---

27 Book I, 32 (R176–177; V1,164).

28 Book I, 40 and 41.

29 Book II, 15 (R594–598).

30 For example, Book I, 18 (R108; V1,101) and II, 9 (R542).

31 Book I, 30 (R169; V1,157).

32 Book I, 1 (R6–7; V1,3), I, 20 (R119; V1,110), for example. The emperor's command does not appear to have been a mere formality. It was also only if the emperor commanded it that the routine Sunday procession of the court within the Palace took place (II, 2, R522).

33 Book I, 68 and scholion (R364; V2,112).

rosemary, or whatever was in flower.[34] The Triklinos of the Magnaura was sometimes strewn with roses.[35] On Ascension Day the emperor was presented with crosses with roses twined around them, and on All Saints Day with wreaths of roses.[36] On the Saturday before Palm Sunday, St Lazarus' Day, the members of the senate were given palm fronds and marjoram and whatever other sweet-smelling flowers were in season.[37] Come the autumn and the vintage festival held at the Palace at Hiereia, a seasonable bower was created beside the vineyard where the emperor distributed bunches of grapes to members of the court.[38]

The organisation of court ceremonies could not always have gone smoothly, as is hinted at in the account of the emperor appointing proconsuls. The whole court joined the emperor, processing probably into the Chrysotriklinos as usual. The appointee if he was already a patrician came in with the others. But if he was not already a patrician, or if he was running late, he came in at the end of the procession.[39] There is an air of greater informality in the appointment of officials where the *praipositos* acted on the emperor's behalf. In appointing a deputy for the demes it was necessary first to find the demarch, but if he happened be sick they went to his house for the ceremony of appointing his deputy.[40] For other appointments the eparch had to be found, and if he could not be found in the court procession a messenger was sent to find him, and if he turned out to be sick, they got another official to be a substitute for him.[41]

In conclusion, two examples from Constantine's own time show that he himself tolerated and even instigated innovations in ceremonial. His ne'er-do-well and fun-loving half-brother Theophylaktos Lekapenos had been appointed patriarch (933–956) by his father Romanos I. The *Book of Ceremonies* records how at the service in Hagia Sophia for the Feast of Orthodoxy when Theophylaktos was patriarch, and that included ten years under Constantine after Romanos had been deposed, not only candles but sweet-smelling incense was burned, and the patriarch used to have a sweet (*doulkion*) at the side of the Chapel of St Theophylaktos, and the rulers enjoyed the sweet with the members of the court whom they had invited.[42]

---

34 Book I, 1 (R6; V1,3–4), and II, 15 (R573).
35 Book II, 15 (R574).
36 Book I, 18 (R111; V1,103) and II, 7 (R536).
37 Book I, 31 (R170; V1,158).
38 Book I, 78 (R373–374; V2,175–176).
39 Book I, 49 (R256; V2,62).
40 Book I, 56 (R272; V2,80).
41 Book I, 57 (R273; V2,81).
42 Book I, 28 (R160; V1,148).

But there was also the occasion of the visit of the Saracen ambassador from the emir of Tarsos, when Constantine again broke with convention. He allowed, amongst all the rest of the splendour, the imperial guard to wear torques decorated with precious stones and large pearls, although it was not normal for non-eunuchs to put on such a torque with pearls, or even precious stones.[43] While we are tut-tutting over that, we also catch him "cheating". To impress his Saracen visitors after the chariot races when the Blues had won he ordered that the other faction, too, with all their attendants, join in the victory dance along the Mese to the Church of the Theotokos in the district of the Diakonissa.[44]

---

43 Book II, 15 (R584).
44 Book II, 15 (R590).

SOCIETY AND COURT: 2

OUTSIDERS BY *TAXIS*: PERCEPTIONS OF NON-CONFORMITY IN ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH-CENTURY LITERATURE

Dion Smythe / King's College, London

Introduction

Hans-Georg Beck's article "Formes de non-conformisme à Byzance"[1] is an obvious starting point for any discussion of conformity and non-conformity in Byzantium. He notes the origin of the terms "dissenter", "non-conformist" and "non-conformity" in the Elizabethan Church Settlement, and goes on to describe how these terms have been adopted by sociologists to describe actions in contravention of the norms of a given human society. The terms lose their precise meanings when used in sociology. No longer is conformity or non-conformity determined by observance or contravention of an Act of Parliament or Order in Council. Social conformity and non-conformity are two opposing attitudes, and each can be defined only in terms of the other. Beck identifies two difficulties in this self-referential definition. Firstly the norms of conduct in any society represent the consensus of a group, taken to be the majority and known to Antiquity as the *pars sanior*. But this consensus is either unspoken or is expressed only obliquely.[2] The second problem is that non-conformity to social norms, whether implicit or explicit, calls into question the entire edifice of the social structure. This remains true whether the non-conformity is a revolutionary struggle, criticism with reform as its goal, or a purely passive withdrawal from society "un «départ», une sorte d'anachorèse".[3]

If notions of conformity and non-conformity are to be used in the analysis of Byzantine society, Beck presents the problem to be dealt with bluntly: "Tout d'abord il faut poser la question suivants: quelles sont les normes de conduite déterminantes de la société byzantine?"[4] Were the norms of Byzantine society dictated by Christian Orthodoxy; or by the ideological, political and cultural spiral round the autocratic centre; or by a system of patronage which created particular power structures; or even by Greek

---

1 H.-G. BECK, "Formes de non-conformisme à Byzance," *BAcBelg*, series 5, 65, 1979, pp. 313–329.
2 BECK, "Formes de non-conformisme," p. 313.
3 Ibid., p. 314.
4 Loc. cit.

παιδεία and ἀστειότης; or were the norms created by all these influences at the same time? Even if the norms are identified, there remains the problem of how they were worked out in daily life. Religious dissenters in seventeenth-century England called social orthodoxies into question as well, and Byzantine Orthodoxy was clearly more than "a simple profession of the correct faith"; rather it was "un mélange de conceptions dogmatiques, culturelles et politiques, difficile à pénétrer et pour cette raison même difficile à définir".[5]

A second problem is the homogeneity of our knowledge of Byzantine society: "practically speaking, we possess detailed knowledge of the ideology, norms and rules of only the directing class and those who ape the models of the leaders because they wish someday to be numbered amongst them."[6] What Beck has identified here is the dominant ideology of sociology[7] — the articulated unified attitude of the governing class, though each individual member of the governing class may not express all the attitudes of the dominant ideology. Beck then states, without supporting evidence, that one may suppose that the lower orders (les couches sociales inférieures)[8] are less conformist than their betters. Beck suggests that many parts of the dominant ideology, such as the imperial ideology or the political theories of the men of letters, had little, if any relevance to these lower orders. What this seems to discount completely is the possibility of a form of politics of deference.[9] An essential quality of a dominant ideology is that it extends throughout its society, being rejected only by a small minority who are defined as outsiders. This is not to say — if we take the imperial ideology as the example — that the crowd or mob understood it in the same way as the governing class. If a negative view of human nature is assumed for the moment, the ruling élite accepted the imperial ideology because it explained the reality that surrounded

---

5 Loc. cit.

6 Loc. cit. (the translation is mine).

7 N. ABERCROMBIE, S. HILL & B.S. TURNER, *The Dominant Ideology Thesis*, London, 1980.

8 BECK, "Formes de non-conformisme," p. 314.

9 This idea derives from work on British twentieth-century politics, where on average at least one-third of the working class must vote Conservative for that party to have any chance of gaining power; aspirational voting complicates analysis of such politics of deference: A.H. HANSON & M. WALLES, *Governing Britain*, Glasgow 1975, pp. 31–68. How to account for aspirational acceptance of the dominant ideology by the Byzantine πολλοί is a problem, but Beck himself allows for aspirational acceptance of the ideology: "celles qui calquent les modèles des dirigeants, parce qu'ils désirent eux-mêmes être de leur nombre un jour ou l'autre": BECK, "Formes de non-conformisme," p. 314.

them, and also because it perpetuated their group in power. For the lower orders, there is no way in which the imperial ideology as expressed by the ruling élite could be said to have been in their material interest; in fact it worked counter to it as part of its function was to keep the élite in power and the others in subjection. However, within the imperial ideology there must have been articulations of the reality of the lower orders or they would not have accepted it.[10] A final problem identified by Beck is that changes in the ideology of the "establishment" will have been matched by changes in non-conformity, as they are mirrored opposites.[11]

There are two ways of examining attitudes to non-conformity in Byzantium. One is to study the norms or legal position. Beck abandoned this approach almost before it had started in favour of identifying non-conformity by its outward and visible signs — in Beck's examples hair-length and clothes.[12] Words are symbolic information conveyors whose form is arbitrary, and whose meaning is determined by those who use them.[13] The use of symbols by persons in social interaction enables them to give meaning to transactions and to understand — at a socially defined level — what is going on, to create the symbolic environment in which they live.[14] Words and language are not passive reflectors of an observable, phenomenologically distinct range of objects out there, rather they are part of the symbolic screen which sifts, edits and rationalises sense-impressions and perceptions into a recognisable form.[15] In this paper I present evidence of

---

10 I am unaware of any application of these ideas of the politics of deference to Byzantine society.

11 BECK, "Formes de non-conformisme," p. 315.

12 Ibid., pp. 315–329.

13 G. LENSKI & J. LENSKI, *Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology*, 4th ed., New York 1982, p. 18.

14 "Symbolization constitutes objects not constituted before, objects which would not exist except for the context of social relationships wherein symbolization occurs. Language does not simply symbolize a situation or object which is already there in advance; it makes possible the existence or the appearance of that situation or object, for it is part of the mechanism whereby that situation or object is created": J.B. McKEE, *Introduction to Sociology*, New York 1969, p. 61, quoting G.H. MEAD.

15 McKEE, *Introduction to Sociology*, p. 62; M. DOUGLAS, *In the Active Voice*, London 1982, p. 3, suggests that this speech determinism is not the best corrective to mechanistic determinism. For an opposing view to McKee, see C. MANGO, "Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror," in *Byzantium and its Image: History and Culture of the Byzantine Empire and its Heritage*, London 1984, pp. 3–18. For the Byzantinist, more recent suggested approaches to Byzantine literature are to be found in M.E.

non-conformity by τάξις from three literary sources: Psellos' *Chronographia*,[16] Komnene's *Alexiad*,[17] and Choniates' *Narrative*.[18]

If literature as an expression and constructor of social reality is the source for this examination of non-conformity in Byzantium, what is meant by "outsiders by τάξις"? An outsider is someone who is not an insider; the outsider is the Other. Such a definition has a certain Gallic finesse to it, which is fitting as it draws to mind that other French formulation of One and Other used previously to define Byzantium,[19] but it does not make the concept intelligible. Kristeva has widened out the notion of the strange, the other, the outsider to include discussions of the individual psyche and general culture, which clouds the issue even more.[20] Properly speaking, there is as yet no unified sociological theory of deviance [the dominant élite's term is autocentrically used in sociology to describe non-conformity]. Rather there are orientations, sensitising concepts,[21] which help develop such a theory. The lists of deviants used in empirical studies of modern society — the nuts, sluts and preverts [sic] of undergraduate course titles in American institutions[22] — make interesting (if not very politically correct) reading: murderers, robbers, convicts, drug-addicts, prostitutes, homosexuals, divorcés and divorcées, widows and orphans, paupers, suicides, hippies, racially-mixed couples, vegetarians, the mentally ill, the old, and stutterers.[23] If all these persons can be defined as deviant non-conformists, what does it mean? Goode has pointed out that basically it means nothing.[24] Non-conformity in isolation is meaningless: a theory of sociological otherness must identify the

---

MULLETT, "Dancing with Deconstructionists in the Gardens of the Muses: New Literary History vs ?," *BMGS* 14, 1990, pp. 258–275.

16 Michel PSELLOS, *Chronographie*, ed. & tr. Émile RENAULD, Paris 1967.

17 Anne COMNÈNE, *Alexiade*, ed. & tr. Bernard LEIB, Paris, 1967.

18 Niketas CHONIATES, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. J.A. van DIETEN, Berlin & New York 1975; *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates*, tr. H.J. MAGOULIAS, Detroit 1984.

19 L. JAMES, "'He is the Subject, ... She is the Other': Women and Representation in Byzantium," in C. BARBER & L. JAMES (edd.), *Gender in Byzantium: Still an Issue?* (forthcoming).

20 J. KRISTEVA, *Strangers to Ourselves*, tr. L.S. ROUDIEZ, Hemel Hempstead 1991.

21 E. GOODE, "On Behalf of Labeling Theory," *Social Problems* 22, 1974–75, p. 582, citing H. BLUMER, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*, Englewood Cliffs N.J. 1969, pp. 147–151.

22 A. LIAZOS, "The Poverty of the Sociology of Deviance: Nuts, Sluts and Perverts," *Social Problems* 20, 1972–73, p. 111a.

23 LIAZOS, "Nuts, Sluts and Preverts," pp. 106b–107b.

24 GOODE, "On Behalf of Labeling Theory," p. 579.

dominant élite (the insiders) as well as the powerless (the outsiders), and clarify the relationship — one of differential power — between them.

The materialist view of deviance is that non-conformity has an objective reality, that can be measured in some way. The stress is on norms, or their institutionalised variant, laws. The identification of the norm (usually with a sanction for the transgression of the norm), coupled with the action that contravenes it, is held to provide an objective definition of deviancy. Whilst the materialist-realist view has the appeal of simplicity, it fails to answer three questions: who does the defining? how is behaviour defined as deviant? and why is concealed deviant behaviour by the dominant élite treated differently?[25] Furthermore, this orientation implies that outsiders are the dross of society; and that deviancy is somehow intrinsic to the outsider. This depersonalises outsiders, turning them into objects upon which social processes operate, alienating them from human society, rather than seeing them as human actors engaged in social transactions even if they are acting from a subordinate social position. Such tendencies are countered by labelling theory, which sees deviancy as an ascribed social construction.[26]

Labelling theory has much of the Holy Roman Empire about it: it is not a theory and it does not label. Goode finds no unified school espousing the research method — indeed he is hard pushed even to find one exponent.[27] The most famous definition is Becker's: the non-conformist is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; non-conformist behaviour is behaviour that people label as non-conformist.[28] The dominant group defines certain behaviour as non-conformist; it defines persons who engage in such behaviour as non-conformists; it treats them in the appropriate fashion — applying sanctions of increasing severity, until the individual is given outsider status.[29] Non-conformity must be understood as the product of some

---

25 J.P. GIBBS, *Norms, Deviance and Social Control: Conceptual Matters*, New York 1981, p. 26. This is Liazos' "covert institutional violence" ("Nuts, Sluts and Preverts," pp. 104, 109, 111–114). See also J.I. KITSUSE & M. SPECTOR, "Social Problems and Deviance: Some Parallel Issues," *Social Problems* 22, 1974–75, p. 586.

26 J. DOLLIMORE, "Masculine Sexuality — 1: Homophobia and Sexual Difference," in R. YOUNG (ed.), Sexual Difference, *Oxford Literary Review* 8, 1986, p. 7.

27 GOODE, "On Behalf of Labeling Theory," pp. 570a–571b; cf. also J. HAGAN, "Labelling and Deviance: A Case Study in the 'Sociology of the Interesting'," *Social Problems* 20, 1972–73, pp. 447b–448a.

28 H.S. BECKER, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, 2nd ed., New York & London 1973, p. 9.

29 F.E. MERRILL, *Society and Culture: An Introduction to Sociology*, 3d ed., Engelwood Cliffs N.J. 1965, p. 56.

sort of transaction between the rule-breaker and the dominant élite of society.[30] This theoretical orientation helps explain the Byzantine Other, by turning attention away from some supposed "real" cause of deviancy, to locate its origins in the social interaction between the dominant élites (the powerful) and the mass of the powerless.[31] Power differentials divide society into the haves and the have-nots. The dominant élite expends resources to ensure they remain numbered among the haves and that other élites are treated as outsiders. Rebels, aiming to replace the dominant élite, threaten the establishment and so are dealt with as outsiders. Outsiders by τάξις are those individuals who for various reasons are alienated from the élite who exercise power, either by lack of material resources or for some other reason. By outsiders by τάξις I do not mean outsiders by class in a simple economic sense. Τάξις means order, arrangement or class of men. In the specifically Byzantine context, τάξις denotes the sequence of imperial offices and rankings which developed from the Late Antique *cursus honorum*. I stress the difference between outsider by class and the outsider by τάξις because although the notional difference between the powerful and poor as elucidated by Rosemary Morris is important, differences by τάξις are not merely ones of economic function and achievement. For example, education can serve as a measure of alienation because the Byzantine élite was either well-educated in the classics, or made the pretence of being so. Similarly, the category of outsider by provincial origin is an aspect of assigned outsider role by τάξις. It has been suggested with good reason that the Byzantine Empire should be viewed not as a proto-nation-state of the modern period, but as the last city-state of antiquity. Elements of both interpretations are true, but this idea of Byzantium as a city-state helps explain the attitude of Constantinopolitans to their fellow subjects in the provinces, whom they did not regard as their fellow citizens.[32] Residence in the City — and access to the capital's education and court — could erase lowly, provincial origins, but this analysis puts a simple gloss on a very complex issue.

---

30 S. COHEN, *Images of Deviance*, Harmondsworth 1971, p. 14; G.M. WHITE & J. KIRKPATRICK, *Person, Self and Experience: Exploring Pacific Ethnopsychologies*, London 1985, p. 16.

31 F. BARTH, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Culture Difference*, Boston 1969, pp. 13–14; R. MORRIS, "The Powerful and the Poor in Tenth-century Byzantium," *Past and Present* 73, 1976, pp. 3–27.

32 P. MAGDALINO, "Constantinople and the ἔξω χῶραι in the Time of Balsamon," in N. OIKONOMIDES (ed.), *Byzantium in the Twelfth Century*, Athens 1991, pp. 194–197.

The attempt to construct a purely economic argument of the outsider is rendered impossible by the existence of certain roles in Byzantine society, whose status clearly lies beyond the pale of the insiders. Most noticeable in this category is the role of the imperial rebel. The means of power transmission in Byzantium from one emperor to another was not fixed. In part this was due to the lively Byzantine tradition that the emperor owed his position to election by the army, senate and the people. This notion that the imperial office — for all the mystique of *porphyrogennesis* — was not tied in the blood, meant that the man with Divine support could make an attempt and win the throne, his success indicating Divine favour. The imperial rebel is a liminal role of outsider status; if the rebellion is successful, then the rebel ceases to be rebel, and becomes the God-guarded emperor of the Romans; but in between is that liminal stage, when subject becomes rebel and therefore moves outside the norms of society, but before he is reincorporated as the insider *par excellence*, the emperor. Anna Komnene's account of her father's rebellion is the clearest example that outsider status is not a rigid social category, but the dynamic product of social interaction.

The second group of outsiders by τάξις is the city crowd, the common rabble. The three authors have little in common with this group. However, though it is clear that the lower orders are regarded by these authors as outsiders, uneducated and stupid, nevertheless, they are not always portrayed in negative terms: the good and faithful servant has a function to play in all three works. The function of the outraged urban mob can vary considerably, and shows the necessity of a consideration of context when attempting to analyse a mob appearance. Their status as social outcasts must be understood on a symbolic level in a work of literature as well as on the narrative-factual level.

The third group of outsiders by τάξις is the most difficult to name. For Psellos and Choniates, they are the upwardly-mobile officials these two career bureaucrats have identified as threats. For Komnene the term *parvenu* does not strictly fit, as her antagonists are normally nobles — even if foreigners — who are opposed to Alexios Komnenos.[33] This third group of outsiders by τάξις, however, shows the non-material nature of the outsider social role, dependent to a large extent on the perception of the authors.

Finally, in one sense the authors themselves are outsiders by τάξις. Psellos wrote as a bureaucrat out of favour; Komnene wrote sequestered far from power and influence; and Choniates wrote having lost possessions,

---

33 A partial exception to this rule, though still no aid in resolving the "upwardly-mobile" idea, is the way she casts her brother John into a swarthy outsider role.

power and influence. To describe a porphyrogennete princess and two high governmental bureaucrats as outsiders may appear bizarre, but if the transitory nature of the outsider social status is not recognised, then its utility as a tool of socio-historical analysis is lost.

I. *Rebels as Outsiders*

The first outsiders by τάξις to appear in *The Chronographia* are the rebels Skleros and Phokas. The first description of Skleros is positive:

> a man both capable of deliberation and expert at execution, both well-known for his wealth — great enough for a tyrant — and having the vigour of political domination, both successful in great battles and having the agreement of all the army for this plan of his.[34]

The overtly positive aspect is tempered by the use of τυράννῳ; the end to which Skleros intends to use his advantages casts him in an outsider role. At first, the revolt seemed destined for success as the heavily armoured infantry of the army went over to him *en masse*.[35] This led Skleros to believe that he had merely to move against the emperor with cavalry and footsoldiers and the throne would be his.[36] Basil II's advisers[37] thought they had found a safe haven in Bardas Phokas. This "certain Bardas" was:

> a man of noble birth and of greatest bravery, being the nephew of the emperor Nikephoros, [and] judged worthy of battling against the revolting Skleros.[38]

The imperial advisers were only too aware of the dangers of entrusting Phokas with the supreme command. He came from an imperial family and would never think of himself in a lowly position.[39] To prevent the possibility of rebellion, Bardas Phokas was stripped of his civilian (i.e., secular) status and was enrolled among the clerics of the church.[40] Credited

---

34 *Chron.* I, 5 (RENAULD I, pp. 4–5, 4–8).
35 *Chron.* I, 5 (RENAULD I, p. 5, 13–14).
36 *Chron.* I, 5 (RENAULD I, p. 5, 10–12). The desertion of the heavily-armed infantry, not the mounted soldiers, is held to be decisive, which contrasts with the continual stress on the mounted "knights" in the western style in the *Alexiad* and the *Narrative*: M.E. MARTIN, "An Adriatic Hastings, 1081," *History Today* 27, 1977, pp. 219–225.
37 *Chron.* I, 5 (RENAULD I, p. 5, 13).
38 *Chron.* I, 5 (RENAULD I, p. 5, 17–19).
39 *Chron.* I, 6 (RENAULD I, p. 5, 2–3).
40 *Chron.* I, 6 (RENAULD I, p. 5, 3–5).

with quick comprehension, a thorough knowledge of the necessities of warfare, great physical strength and his resemblance to Nikephoros Phokas,[41] Basil II's advisers were right to hedge Bardas Phokas round with restrictions to keep him loyal: with such advantages, he would have found the transition from rebel to legitimate emperor very easy.

Skleros' status as an outsider is confirmed by Psellos' account of Pankalia (979). Skleros is introduced as the rebel,[42] unable to restrain his impetuosity,[43] who broke the rules of agreed single combat and struck Bardas Phokas at the charge.[44] When struck himself, Skleros turns and flees rather than standing and being a man. These are all opposites of the qualities expected of a true emperor. In contrast, Bardas Phokas retains his high social standing as a man of constancy, well-able to withstand misfortune on the battlefield. Unable to face Bardas Phokas in battle and too embarrassed to submit to Basil II, Skleros adopted a plan Psellos describes as neither the best advised nor the safest.[45] He crossed out of the Roman borders, and went into the lands of the Assyrians, with all his forces.[46] Skleros has moved from being merely an ideological outsider, to being a physical outsider.

Returning to Constantinople after his victory over Skleros, Phokas was honoured with a triumph and numbered among the intimates of the emperor.[47] When Phokas saw his opportunities for advancement slipping away from him,[48] he raised up a revolt against Basil that was both most grave and most dangerous.[49] The revolt was further strengthened by the addition of the leading and most powerful families.[50] All Bardas Phokas' laudable qualities now disappear beneath his insurrection in Psellos' account.

Phokas committed his cause to fortune at Abydon in 989, against the advice of the astrologers in his entourage.[51] Psellos' ambivalence to the occult is shown here, as this rejected advice was correct, but this inversion of the true order of things may be due to Phokas' status as a rebel. In contrast to Phokas' soothsayers, Basil II faced his enemy's irresistible charge holding

---

41 *Chron.* I, 7 (RENAULD I, pp. 5–6, 1–7).
42 *Chron.* I, 8 (RENAULD I, p. 6, 5).
43 *Chron.* I, 8 (RENAULD I, p. 6, 5–7).
44 *Chron.* I, 8 (RENAULD I, p. 6, 5–7).
45 *Chron.* I, 9 (RENAULD I, p. 6, 4–5).
46 *Chron.* I, 9 (RENAULD I, pp. 6–7, 5–7).
47 *Chron.* I, 10 (RENAULD I, p. 7, 4).
48 *Chron.* I, 10 (RENAULD I, p. 7, 9–10).
49 *Chron.* I, 10 (RENAULD I, p. 7, 11–13).
50 *Chron.* I, 10 (RENAULD I, p. 7, 13–14).
51 *Chron.* I, 15 (RENAULD I, pp. 9–10, 6–10).

the icon of the Mother of the Word,[52] confirming his orthodoxy and legitimacy. Phokas fell suddenly from his saddle, was dispatched, and the rebellion collapsed.

In his second revolt,[53] Skleros was careful not to confront the emperor directly. The imperial forces were continually harassed; convoys of necessary shipments were intercepted, imperial forces were denied free use of the roads and goods transported from elsewhere to the capital[54] were intercepted and put to good use by Skleros' army. Skleros also intercepted instructions coming from the palace.[55] Psellos emphasises the length of time the rebellion lasted — a whole year by his reckoning — and adds that this evil (τυραννίς)[56] troubled the state for many years to come.[57]

Basil II tried by various stratagems to trap Skleros, but Skleros proved the more experienced general.[58] Recognising that Skleros would never be defeated, Basil sent an embassy offering terms if Skleros would cease his actions and accept first place after himself in the empire.[59] Skleros eventually accepted the terms after due consideration of his age.[60]

Psellos' account of his embassy in 1057, on behalf of the emperor Michael VI to Isaak Komnenos, who was in revolt, is well known.[61] Upon the embassy's arrival at Nicomedia, they were greeted warmly[62] and were escorted directly to the presence of the commander.[63] Psellos takes care to call Isaak merely "the commander", not "the emperor". The embassy and their escort dismounted before Isaak's headquarters, and waited a moment. The delay was due to Isaak's unwillingness to have too many people in the imperial tent, now that the sun had set.[64] Note that Isaak Komnenos' tent is now "imperial". The embassy was finally admitted. Isaak, though seated on a raised throne, was surrounded by only a few of his own bodyguards, dressed

---

52 *Chron.* I, 16 (RENAULD I, p. 10, 4).
53 *Chron.* I, 24 (RENAULD I, p. 15, 4).
54 *Chron.* I, 24 (RENAULD I, p. 15, 11).
55 *Chron.* I, 24 (RENAULD I, p. 15, 12–15).
56 *Chron.* I, 25 (RENAULD I, p. 15, 1).
57 *Chron.* I, 25 (RENAULD I, p. 15, 2–4).
58 *Chron.* I, 26 (RENAULD I, p. 16, 1–4).
59 *Chron.* I, 26 (RENAULD I, p. 16, 4–7).
60 *Chron.* I, 26 (RENAULD I, p. 16, 11).
61 R. BEATON, "*De Vulgari Eloquentia* in Twelfth Century Byzantium," in HOWARD-JOHNSTON (ed.), *Byzantium and the West*, Amsterdam 1988, pp. 261–268.
62 *Chron.* VII, 20 (RENAULD II, p. 94, 4–5).
63 *Chron.* VII, 20 (RENAULD II, p. 94, 11).
64 *Chron.* VII, 20 (RENAULD II, p. 94, 16).

more as a soldier than as an emperor.[65] His treatment of them was equally unlike an emperor.[66] The audience the next day was a more elaborate affair. It was οἱ τῆς βουλῆς πρῶτοι [67] who came to escort the ambassadors to Isaak, still the commander,[68] but now seated in a much larger tent capable of holding an army and its foreign troops.[69] This was the full imperial dignity of the Byzantine βασιλεὺς καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ.[70] Psellos had not fully accepted the propriety of Isaak's position: the sight within the tent is worthy of a tyrant (not a duly established emperor), and it causes shaking fear rather than proper respect.[71] The scene within the tent is described: Isaak is ὁ βασιλεὺς,[72] seated on a golden throne, with a footstool, and dressed magnificently.[73] He is lost in thought and contemplation as befits a Byzantine emperor. Round his person were circles of warriors: closest were the important commanders, drawn from the nobility; then the front-line soldiers; next the light-armed troops. The final circle was composed of allied troops from the nations.[74] Psellos presents Isaak surrounded by an outer ring of foreigners to accentuate the fact that even though strictly speaking only a rebel at this point[75] Isaak was about to become emperor.[76]

The revolt against Constantine IX by Maniakes was a failure in man-management. Psellos opens his account of Maniakes in a very positive way, crediting his skill and boldness with stopping the barbarians' onslaught and preserving Byzantine freedom.[77] Maniakes had risen through the ranks, which Psellos seems to regard favourably, especially as his rise to general was gradual not meteoric.[78] Nature had endowed him with everything

---

65 *Chron.* VII, 21 (RENAULD II, p. 94, 2–4).

66 *Chron.* VII 21 (RENAULD II, p. 95, 9ff).

67 The senior councillors or the leaders of the Senate: the ambiguity may be intentional (*Chron.* VII, 22; RENAULD II, p. 95, 4).

68 *Chron.* VII, 22 (RENAULD II, p. 95, 5).

69 *Chron.* VII, 22 (RENAULD II, p. 95, 6–7).

70 *Chron.* VII, 22 (RENAULD II, p. 95, 7–15).

71 *Chron.* VII, 23 (RENAULD II, p. 96, 5–6).

72 *Chron.* VII, 24 (RENAULD II, p. 96, 5).

73 *Chron.* VII, 24 (RENAULD II, p. 96, 7–8). See also *Chron.* VII, 50 (RENAULD II, pp. 113–114, 1–2 for Isaak Komnenos and dress, when dealing with ambassadors.

74 *Chron.* VII, 24 (RENAULD II, p. 97, 22–25).

75 *Chron.* VII, 24 (RENAULD II, p. 99, 1–7).

76 See D. SMYTHE, "Why Do Barbarians Stand Round the Emperor at Diplomatic Receptions?," in J. SHEPARD & S. FRANKLIN (edd.), *Byzantine Diplomacy*, Aldershot 1992, pp. 305–312.

77 *Chron.* VI, 75 (RENAULD I, p. 154, 2–6).

78 *Chron.* VI, 76 (RENAULD II, p. 1, 1–8).

necessary to be a general. He was very tall and everyone had to look up at him as if to the top of a mountain.[79] Michael V sent Maniakes to reconquer Apulia and Calabria in full force. All the strategies were attempted and it was clear Maniakes would succeed, even if he had to do it with his own hands.[80] Rather than conciliating Maniakes with honours as was really his due, when he came to power Constantine IX treated him as if he was already in rebellion.[81] Constantine IX sent envoys (one of whom was one who had just come into the palace from the street-corner[82]) to Maniakes, not to appease him but to threaten him.

Maniakes had already embarked on revolt[83] when the envoy from Constantine IX appeared, accusing Maniakes of *lèse-majesté*.[84] Maniakes' troops killed the envoy. At Ostrovo in 1043, Maniakes is shown firmly in control, striking terror wherever he appeared and giving heart to his own troops. Maniakes fell due to a decision by God, the reason for which is unknown.[85] Psellos seems ambivalent about Maniakes: though previously described as the rebel[86] he describes Maniakes's sliding from his horse as a θέαμα ἐλεεινὸν.[87] Even though defeated and killed as a rebel in a civil war, Maniakes remains an insider.[88]

The first section of Book 1 of *The Alexiad* (Chapters 1 to 9) deals with the rebels on whom the young Alexios cut his teeth. Anna enumerates these three labours of this latter day Hercules[89] when he defeated Roussel de Bailleul, Nikephoros Bryennios (treated carefully as Anna Komnene's future grandfather-in-law) and Basilakios. All are presented as outsiders by τάξις because they rebelled against the legitimate emperor. Three main qualities are emphasised: manliness (ἀνδρεία), nobility (γενναιότης) and glory in battle (κῦδος).

The idea that Alexios Komnenos himself could be portrayed as an outsider within *The Alexiad* may seem unlikely, but Alexios and Isaak are οἱ ἀποστάται[90] when they rebel against Botaneiates. In Book 2 we see

---

79 *Chron.* VI, 77 (RENAULD II, p. 2, 5–9).
80 *Chron.* VI, 78 (RENAULD II, p. 2, 6–10).
81 *Chron.* VI, 79 (RENAULD II, pp. 2–3).
82 *Chron.* VI, 80 (RENAULD II, p. 3, 6–9).
83 *Chron.* VI, 81 (RENAULD II, p. 3, 1–2).
84 *Chron.* VI, 81 (RENAULD II, p. 3, 13–14).
85 *Chron.* VI, 84 (RENAULD II, p. 5, 7–8).
86 *Chron.* VI, 83 (RENAULD II, p. 4, 12).
87 *Chron.* VI, 84 (RENAULD II, p. 5, 24).
88 *Chron.* VI, 86 (RENAULD II, p. 6, 1–2).
89 *Alexiad*, I, ix, 6 (LEIB I, p. 36, 11–16).
90 *Alexiad*, II, vi, 1 (LEIB I, p. 79, 31).

Alexios' separation from society, his metamorphosis into the rebel's shadow world, and socialisation into his new role, though it is not until Book 3 that the rites of purification and incorporation are completed.[91] Alexios' liminal position appears most clearly in the conflict over who should be the βασιλεύς-elect. The Doukai spared no effort to ensure that Alexios was the soldiers' choice. Alexios pretended to hold his brother in great respect, but Isaak bowed to the inevitable and placed the imperial slippers on his brothers feet, reminding him of the vision Alexios had had.[92] With this theophany whilst in a liminal state, Alexios is a worthy anthropological paradigm. He may have been a rebel against Botaneiates and to have been judged as one of "those set under authority"[93] but there were limits to his outsider status.[94]

The second emperor portrayed as an outsider by Anna Komnene is her brother John. Her own birth had been accompanied by a miraculous event[95] but her brother's birth was greeted with joy.[96] A curious comment follows on the attitudes of the lower orders. While the palace was *en fête* on the birth of the heir, some were honestly joyful but others merely made the pretence.[97] This is because Anna felt she was cheated by the crowds of the city when her father died, as she should have inherited.

The account of the Alexios Branas rebellion by Choniates is in keeping with the standard rebel account seen in *The Chonographia* and *The Alexiad*. He is introduced as a general.[98] He carried out his command guardedly not rashly[99] harassing the enemy, but guarding his own army. Temperate in command, Branas was intemperate in his opposition to Isaak Angelos. Knowing that the Roman forces under his command would not aid him in his rebellion, he turned to German allies.[100] To gain more support Branas went to the Great Church at night, to win over those from outside.[101] As they came in, Branas explained his opposition to the emperor and stressed his

---

91 *Alexiad*, III, v, 1-6 (LEIB I, pp. 116–119, 18–12). For the liminal state, see A. van GENNEP, *The Rites of Passage*, London 1960; L.M. DANFORTH, *The Death Rituals of Rural Greece*, Princeton 1982.

92 *Alexiad*, II, vii, 1–7 (LEIB I, pp. 84–87, 17–26).

93 *Alexiad*, III, v, 5 (LEIB I, p. 118, 16–18).

94 *Alexiad*, II, iv, 6 (LEIB I, p. 73, 18–20).

95 *Alexiad*, VI, viii, 2 (LEIB II, p. 61, 9–19).

96 *Alexiad*, VI, viii, 4 (LEIB II, p. 62, 27).

97 *Alexiad*, VI, viii, 4 (LEIB II, pp 62–63, 29–2).

98 *Historia*, ed. van DIETEN, p. 376, 28–30.

99 *Historia*, p. 376, 30–31.

100 *Historia*, p. 377, 40–42.

101 *Historia*, p. 377, 46.

military achievements.[102] Branas was proclaimed emperor by the army in his homeland, and made a good showing before the walls of Constantinople, urging surrender. Branas gave the city five days thinking time and then the tyrant attacked.[103] He made himself terrifying to the citizens and attempted a flanking attack using sea power. As persuasion and assault both failed, Branas — now the rebel — decided to use famine to subjugate Constantinople. Only divine intervention[104] saved the city. Isaak Angelos seeing that the city's population still supported him, used the icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria to show the way to the rebel's defeat.[105]

In Choniates' *Narrative*, Andronikos Komnenos is *the* rebel outsider. At his second appearance, he is identified as the one who would later tyrannise the Romans.[106] Manuel jailed Andronikos for consorting with the Hungarian enemy,[107] but further reasons were:

> his continual free speech, his bodily strength which surpassed many, and having the good bodily form and uncowed intellect which made [him] a substance worthy of rebellion.[108]

These qualities together with his ability in battle and distinction by birth[109] led him to be regarded as completely suspect. His sexual relations with his cousin Eudokia,[110] Philippa of Antioch[111] and Theodora, widow of Baldwin III of Jerusalem[112] stressed his sexual non-conformity. For Choniates, Andronikos is the wild beast[113] who rejected the laws of human society.

II. *The Great Unwashed as Outsiders*

In Psellos' *Chronographia* outsiders by τάξις from the lower orders are usually the city populace. He describes them as weak in understanding. Michael V's personal government had "nothing measured [i.e., moderate] in

---

102 *Historia*, p. 377, 50–51.
103 *Historia*, p. 380, 4.
104 *Historia*, p. 382, 53.
105 *Historia*, pp. 383–386.
106 *Historia*, p. 101, 68.
107 *Historia*, p. 101, 68–73.
108 *Historia*, p. 103, 9–11.
109 *Historia*, p. 103, 14–15
110 *Historia*, pp. 103–104, 19–29.
111 *Historia*, pp. 138–139.
112 *Historia*, p. 141.
113 *Historia*, p. 272, 65 and 74–79; 288, 55; 321, 22; but contrast this with 331, 5–6 and 353, 31–33.

mind".[114] He wanted to change everything straightaway to what he wanted.[115] Officials received neither favourable looks nor intentions, but were all terrified by the same tyrannical words and commands.[116] This theme of unnatural tyranny is one that follows through Psellos' account of Michael V's reign. Having changed the imperial attitude to the officials, Michael V came to rule with only one ambition:

> He wished to display that in truth the citizenry was ruled by him. Most of the officials were deprived of their usual honours and the people were espoused to freedom, so that he would be guarded by the many rather than by the few.[117]

The next element to be conciliated were "the choice people of the City and those who live by the disorder of the agora or by vulgar crafts".[118] He won them over, they were attached to him and displayed their feelings openly.[119] This winning over of the people was put to good use when Michael V attempted to depose the empress Zoe.[120]

This unnatural tyranny provoked a divinely-inspired response, as gradually throughout the City a general feeling of unease came to dominate,[121] which affected all races, fortunes and ages[122] as if the natural order had been overturned. The natural order was so overturned that even the foreign and allied troops brought in by the emperors were not able to contain their anger, "but all wanted to lay down their lives for the empress".[123] Psellos emphasises the unnaturalness of the occurrence.[124] When they could not rescue Zoe, the citizen army turned to Theodora.[125] With the proclamation of Theodora in the Great Church, the mob that violated sanctuary to get her had become the representative of the élite[126] and the emperor Michael V became the outsider.[127] Psellos' treatment of the mob in revolt against Michael V is

---

114 *Chron.* V, 15 (RENAULD I, p. 95, 2–3).
115 *Chron.* V, 15 (RENAULD I, p. 95, 3–4).
116 *Chron.* V, 15 (RENAULD I, p. 95, 4–7).
117 *Chron.* V, 15 (RENAULD I, p. 95, 7–11).
118 *Chron.* V, 16 (RENAULD I, p. 96, 2–3).
119 *Chron.* V, 16 (RENAULD I, p. 96, 5–7).
120 Senate: *Chron.* V, 23 (RENAULD I, p. 100, 9–16; majority of people: *Chron.* V, 23 (RENAULD I, p. 100, 16–19).
121 *Chron.* V, 23 (RENAULD I, p. 101, 2–5).
122 *Chron.* V, 23 (RENAULD I, p. 101, 2–3).
123 *Chron.* V, 25 (RENAULD I, p. 102, 19–22).
124 *Chron.* V, 26 (RENAULD I, p. 102, 3–4).
125 *Chron.* V, 37 (RENAULD I, p. 108, 4–5).
126 *Chron.* V, 37 (RENAULD I, pp. 108–109, 5–1).
127 *Chron.* V, 43 (RENAULD I, pp. 111–112, 10–8).

itself non-conformist because Michael V had moved from being the legitimate emperor to being a tyrant.

The general crowd is not viewed with favour by Anna Komnene. The citizens of Amaseia would not pay the bounty to Tutush for Roussel,[128] but the crowd in Constantinople appeared in a favourable light, as when they sang in praise of Alexios' dash and shrewdness, or when they moved against John Italos,[129] forcing him to denounce his doctrines from the ambo of the Great Church, in effect in the midst of the people.[130] Anna tells us that we should ignore the rumours of the crowd, the action of the better sort when hearing the talk of Alexios and Maria of Alania.[131] Most important to Anna Komnene was not one's origins, but how one conducted oneself in relation to Alexios.

In the broadest of outlines, the great unwashed do not emerge from Choniates' *Narrative* with credit. John II Komnenos is praised for the way in which he held himself aloof from the crowd.[132] A large number of people — especially in Constantinople — is seen as a danger, on Manuel's accession to be quieted with cash.[133] They as the promiscuous crowd[134] — can be won over with copper coins to rebellion.[135] Once aroused, they become unstoppable, not least because of their mixed nature, by race and trades.[136] The Constantinopolitans are to be called stupid.[137] The lack of regard for the lower orders by Manuel is made clear by Choniates when he relates that, after the capture of Corinth and Thebes by the Normans, Manuel secured the release of the well-born, those with imperial connections and those on the military registers. Excluded however were the people of Corinth and Thebes and those of lowly station, the weavers and the beautiful women.[138]

The moment of glory for the great unwashed in Choniates' *Narrative* comes with the Latin conquest. The people of Constantinople acted like men[139] and urged Alexios Angelos to defend the City, as they were

---

128 *Alexiad*, I, ii, 5–6 (LEIB I, p. 13).
129 *Alexiad*, V, ix, 6 (LEIB II, p. 39, 23–24).
130 *Alexiad*, V, ix, 6 (LEIB II, p. 40, 3–7).
131 *Alexiad*, III, i, 4 (LEIB II, p. 105, 6–8).
132 *Historia*, p. 47, 76–78.
133 *Historia*, p. 49, 32–45.
134 *Historia*, p. 232, 36.
135 *Historia*, p. 232, 39.
136 *Historia*, pp. 233–234, 71–74; see also p. 343, 27–31 and 34–37.
137 *Historia*, p. 270, 24–25; p. 349, 14–19; p. 350, 44.
138 *Historia*, p. 98: 1–6.
139 *Historia*, p. 560, 9–10.

patriots.[140] With the conquest, the freedom known by the many was removed, without them having enjoyed it while they had it.[141] On their expulsion, rustics and the common sort called the Constantinopolitans' poverty and nakedness equal citizenship.[142]

III. *The Upwardly Mobile as Outsiders*

In *The Chronographia*, Basil II paid no attention to men of learning, but treated them with scorn.[143] Rather he surrounded himself with men known neither for their brilliance of learning, their birth, nor their knowledge of learning. To them were entrusted the imperial rescripts, and he was accustomed to discuss the most secret matters of state with them.[144] Thus Basil II replaced the leaders of the great families and brought them down to equal others,[145] relative outsiders, forcing them from what they considered to be their rightful place. Members of Constantine VIII's court received a lot of gold, but those at a remove from the palace saw less evidence of his generosity.[146] The recipients of this bounty at court[147] are described as:

> neither of good birth, nor having the luck of the leisured class, but rather being ethnics and barbarians; favoured with education by him and shaped in his own way of doing things, they were judged worthy of more respect and honour than any others.[148]

The purpose is to criticise Constantine VIII who favoured them above the better sort of citizen.

A further example of the outsider made good was the barbarian outcast[149] who outdid all Romans in arrogance. He frequently made public his claim to have hit men who later became emperors. This effrontery drove Psellos to such heights that he wished to strangle the man himself.[150] What prompted Psellos' enmity was the man's rapid promotion, "mingling with the nobility

---

140 *Historia*, p. 561, 12.
141 *Historia*, p. 585, 41–45.
142 *Historia*, p. 393, 70–72.
143 *Chron.* I, 29 (RENAULD I, p. 18, 12–14).
144 *Chron.* I, 29 (RENAULD I, p. 18, 1–3).
145 *Chron.* I, 29 (RENAULD I, pp. 18–19, 4–6).
146 *Chron.* II, 3 (RENAULD I, pp. 26–27, 3–5).
147 *Chron.* II, 3 (RENAULD I, p. 27, 6–8).
148 *Chron.* II, 3 (RENAULD I, p. 27, 8–12).
149 *Chron.* VI, 134 (RENAULD II, p. 35, 1–2).
150 *Chron.* VI, 135 (RENAULD II, p. 35, 1–2).

of our senate".[151] He was of unknown family, ignorant and most foul,[152] and yet he was promoted rapidly to a rank Psellos felt he himself had achieved through merit alone. The man then betrayed the trust placed in him as he decided to assassinate Constantine IX and replace him as emperor. Captured and tortured, he named as accomplices men well known for their loyalty.[153] Constantine IX (according to Psellos) took these accusations seriously as the grandees were reduced in status for a time, though they were eventually restored.[154] Psellos never names this barbarian outcast who sought to replace Constantine IX on the throne. We can be sure of very little, though he was probably higher on the social scale than Psellos allows.

Missing from *The Alexiad* is any sense of the "rising middle class". Anna Komnene was secure enough in her status as a porphyrogennete that she had to fear only her brother, not the lower orders.

Like Psellos, Choniates was sensitive to movements in the scale of honours. The rapid elevation of persons for no reason served as a devaluation of the entire system.[155]

> Not only were the dregs of Byzantine society, the members of street-corner society and the markets, the money-changers and the flax weavers ennobled as *sebastoi*, but Skyths and Syrians, held in contempt by those who formerly served emperors, found they could pay to become *sebastoi*.[156]

What this showed was Alexios Angelos' weak understanding and failure to govern properly.[157]

The careers of John Komnenos,[158] Gregory Taronites[159] and Gregory Kamateros[160] showed that family connection did not save one accused of poor administration, whilst the lack of family connection, if ability was present, was no hindrance to advancement. Constantine Angelos was not of a very eminent or well-born family, but he did have a good physique and was graced with a fair face.[161] Nature's favour enabled him to marry Theodora, Manuel's

---

151 *Chron.* VI, 136 (RENAULD II, p. 36, 2).
152 *Chron.* VI, 136 (RENAULD II, p. 36, 5–6).
153 *Chron.* VI, 137 (RENAULD II, p. 37, 17–20).
154 *Chron.* VI, 137 (RENAULD II, p. 37, 20–22).
155 *Historia*, p. 454, 34–43.
156 *Historia*, p. 484, 62–65; cf. W.F. WHYTE, *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*, Chicago 1943.
157 *Historia*, p. 484, 66–68.
158 *Historia*, p. 9, 10 and 11–4.
159 *Historia*, p. 9, 9 and 14–16.
160 *Historia*, p. 9, 16–22.
161 *Historia*, p. 95, 26–28.

aunt. His failure to drive back the Normans, and indeed his own eventual capture was due more to Manuel's reliance in astrology than Constantine's lowly origins.

Constantine Angelos was part of the network of aristocratic families that surrounded the throne, as was Kastamonites. Nothing was done without his knowledge, and not one of the officials was allowed to sit with him, but had to stand in slavish attitude.[162] Kastamonites was eventually carried off by the illness in his joints, but he was replaced by Constantine Mesopotamites, described by Choniates as a small child,[163] a youngster with slate in hand who should have been at school.[164] He became more powerful than Kastamonites and deemed legal whatever Isaak Angelos willed.[165]

IV. *Authors as Outsiders*

It was under Constantine IX that Psellos was promoted to the senate.[166] It is at this point that Psellos' own sense of social insecurity becomes most apparent. Psellos describes Constantine IX's early conduct as emperor as neither temperate nor prudent.[167] For Psellos, the success of the Byzantine polity rested on its honours and resources[168] and in their careful administration. This is exactly what Constantine IX lacked. He emptied the treasuries and honours were thrown without reason to the mob, especially to those who importuned the man vulgarly, and those who spoke nonsense on cue to make him smile.[169] Psellos accuses Constantine IX of overturning the due and established order:

> He opened the senate to the market crowd and all the common people, and this favour was not given to one or two but suddenly by a single edict all were raised to the highest commands.[170]

This apparent generosity was greeted with joy by the crowd who lived in the City, as their discernment had been weakened by city life. It was only later

---

162 *Historia*, p. 438, 36–38.
163 *Historia*, p. 439, 70.
164 *Historia*, p. 439, 68–69.
165 *Historia*, p. 439, 78–80.
166 *Chron.* VI, 14 (RENAULD I, p. 124, 9–11).
167 *Chron.* VI, 29 (RENAULD I, p. 132, 1–2).
168 *Chron.* VI, 29 (RENAULD I, p. 132, 8).
169 *Chron.* VI, 29 (RENAULD I, p. 132, 10–15).
170 *Chron.* VI, 29 (RENAULD I, p. 132, 18–21).

that the honours widely distributed were seen to bring no distinction, and "dignity was removed from those who possessed [the honours]".[171]

In Anna Komnene's self-portrayal as an outsider she describes her life as one of storms and insurrections in spite of her fortunate birth.[172] When discussing Robert Guiscard's folly in believing that he could seize the throne in Constantinople, Anna Komnene says that the very idea made her smile as her pen scratched in the lamplight.[173] At this point there is no explicit statement that Anna Komnene viewed herself as an outsider; merely that she was alone. When she describes her birth in the family section of Book 6, she goes on to describe her life as being composed of many contests, troubles and dangers which she endured because of her love for [Alexios and Irene].[174] In Book 14 Komnene returns to the theme of all the troubles that befell her at the hands of aliens, the evil that people did to her.[175] As well as her own misfortunes, Anna Komnene mourns the death of her parents and husband. No-one, even out of the more insignificant of men, is allowed to visit her, never mind those from whom she might have learnt how things were turning out or her father's retainers.[176] For thirty years, Anna Komnene tell us, she has been an outsider, prevented from seeing her father's friends, some because they were dead, but many because they feared the flood of events.[177] It was these feelings of isolation that gave Anna Komnene her status as an alienated outsider.[178]

The tone of Choniates' *Narrative* is religious — a jeremiad — and Niketas accepts for himself some of the blame for what has befallen his society. When Isaak and Alexios Angelos took gold from the churches to give to the Latins, Niketas and his ilk stayed silent.[179] With the fall of the City, the Byzantines became spatial as well as social outsiders.[180] With one house lost,[181] Choniates rested in his other house while his Venetian helpmeet stood guard. With the arrival of the French immanent, they were forced to flee, managing as best they could as their own servants had

---

171 *Chron.* VI, 30 (RENAULD I, p. 133, 2–3).
172 *Alexiad*, Preface iv, 1 (LEIB I, p. 7, 13).
173 *Alexiad*, I, xv, 6 (LEIB I, p. 56, 13–15).
174 *Alexiad*, VI, viii, 2 (LEIB II, p. 61, 22–25).
175 *Alexiad*, XIV, vii, 4 (LEIB III, p. 174, 18–21).
176 *Alexiad*, XIV, vii, 6 (LEIB III, p. 175, 19–22).
177 *Alexiad*, XIV, vii, 6 (LEIB III, p. 175, 22–27).
178 *Alexiad*, XV, xi, 22 (LEIB III, p. 242, 21–29).
179 *Historia*, p. 552, 71–76; see also 569, 7–10.
180 *Historia*, p. 575, 68–69; see also 579, 77–78.
181 *Historia*, p. 587, 4–6.

inhumanly abandoned them.[182] Though all was lost, and Choniates was on his way to exile, all was not *anomie*.[183] Called upon by an old and sick father, Choniates acted to save the judge's daughter.[184] Though the environment lay in ruins, the pattern of Byzantine social order still remained.

V. *General Conclusions*

In these accounts, similar attributes are given to the rebels: those who succeed are treated carefully; those of high station are treated circumspectly; those drawn from the lower orders are given short shift. The treatments are made more complex by the very different aims of the three works. Psellos writes to inform us of the centrality of Psellos' role in shaping Byzantine destinies. Komnene describes rebels in glowing terms to increase her father's *kudos* when he defeats them. Choniates uses rebels to stress the afflictions that beset the Byzantines in his time.

All three works portray the crowd as stupid, with a tendency to be swayed by flattery or financial gain. The uneducated ousting those who have worked their way up through the ranks of the imperial bureaucracy exercises Psellos considerably. It is less apparent in Choniates' *Narrative* only because the upward mobility of the unrighteous is often part of God's punishment. Psellos was eventually ousted by the *parvenus* he feared and spent his final years attempting to gain imperial favour. Choniates too was ousted from office[185] but in the surrounding maelstrom it had less impact than the loss of his world signalled by the loss of Constantinople.

The social category of the outsider, the person who does not conform and is shunned, makes sense when analysed in opposition to the insider, the conformer. In the literary expressions of Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, notions of conformity and non-conformity constructed a boundary along which Byzantine society was articulated. The boundary was not absolute, and as a social construction it had no objective reality. However to the people for whom it helped make sense of the world in which they lived, questions of conformity and non-conformity were very real indeed.

---

182 *Historia*, p. 588, 33–36.

183 E. DURKHEIM, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, ed. & tr. G. SIMPSON, London 1952.

184 *Historia*, pp. 590–591, 65–11.

185 *Historia*, p. 565, 13–15.

THE AMPHIBIOUS SERPENT: MANUEL I AND THE VENETIANS

Andrew Stone / University of Western Australia

On January 6, that is Epiphany, the feast day of John the Baptist, 1176, the μαΐστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων, the chief imperial rhetor, a deacon by the name of Eustathios, stood and delivered the annual speech of thanksgiving to his master the emperor. This was an established custom,[1] and we have the texts of other such speeches, delivered to Manuel I and to other emperors, in other years. They show the orator at the height of his style, but some historical information can be gained from them. The text of the speech has been preserved, in three manuscripts, and I intend to examine the historical background to a small part of it, that part celebrating the emperor's victory over the Venetians, both in the Adriatic and in the Aegean. The incumbent emperor was Manuel I Komnenos, to be remembered by posterity for an ambitious foreign policy in the days in which the empire's status had been reduced from being a superpower to being merely a powerful European state. Manuel's reign had both brilliant successes and disastrous failures; in the end he overstretched the resources of the Byzantine state and disintegration soon set in during the reign of his son Alexios II, a minor. My interest, however, is in what our orator has to say on Manuel's troubled relations with the Venetians, once themselves subjects of the Byzantine Empire. The relevant paragraphs are the ninth and the eleventh paragraphs (I follow Tafel's paragraph divisions). I will not discuss the tenth paragraph, which the reference to Typhon shows clearly is directed at the Norman rulers of Sicily. A translation of these paragraphs appears at the end of this article.

We can be sure that the ninth paragraph does indeed refer to the Venetians. The expression τὸ πειρατικὸν ἔθνος τὸ ἐξ Ἀδριάδος (the piratical race of the Adriatic) is by itself merely suggestive, but the specific reference to the failed siege of Ancona in 1173, an enterprise in which we know the Venetian navy took part, makes it a certainty. Note the appropriateness of the various uncomplimentary metaphors the orator has employed for the Venetians.

To understand the changes in relations between Manuel and the Venetians it is necessary to understand that it was not in Venice's interest to have any

---

1 P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, Cambridge 1993, pp. 248, 439.

one power dominating both shores of the Adriatic.[2] Therefore, in the course of Manuel's reign, we find the Venetians at first allied to Byzantium against the Normans of Sicily. The Venetians had gained certain trade concessions from the Byzantine emperor, including exemption from paying tithes,[3] and Manuel had renewed the Venetian trading rights in a chrysobull of 1147,[4] that is, four years into his reign.

However, following the Byzantine annexation of Dalmatia in 1163–65,[5] the Venetians began to feel hemmed in by the Byzantines, and they turned to Frederick I Barbarossa, the Holy Roman Emperor, who chose not to follow his predecessor's policy of co-operation with the Greeks.

Manuel in the meantime extended trading privileges to Venice's commercial rivals, the Pisans and the Genoese.[6] The Venetians responded angrily to this measure by pulling down the houses of the Genoese in the Genoese quarter of Constantinople.[7] The emperor ordered the Venetians to rebuild them, but they refused. He then responded on a grand scale, having all the Venetians in the empire arrested in a single day in 1171, and their goods confiscated,[8] a testament to the efficiency of Byzantine administration. The prisons were filled to overflowing, so it became necessary to release some on bail. Those Venetians released in Constantinople seized a large ship which was lying in harbour at the time and made good their escape to Venice.[9]

---

2 G. OSTROGORSKY, *History of the Byzantine State*, tr. J. HUSSEY, 2nd ed., 1968, p. 358; R. BROWNING, *The Byzantine Empire*, London 1980, p. 118.

3 KINNAMOS, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis Gestarum*, VI, 10, ed. A. MEINEKE, CSHB 1836, p. 281.

4 D.M. NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice. A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations*, Cambridge 1988, pp. 85–86; R.-J. LILIE, *Handel und Politik zwischen byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1081–1204)*, Amsterdam 1984, p. 41; F. CHALANDON, *Jean II Comnène et Manuel I Comnène*, Paris 1912, p. 321; M. ANGOLD, *The Byzantine Empire 1025–1204. A Political History*, London & New York 1984, p. 170.

5 F. MAKK, *The Árpáds and the Comneni. Political Relations between Hungary and Byzantium in the 12th Century*, tr. G. NOVÁK, Budapest 1989.

6 NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice*, pp. 94, 96.

7 KINNAMOS, p. 282.

8 KINNAMOS, p. 283; Niketas CHONIATES, ed. J.A. van DIETEN, Berlin & New York 1975, p. 172; NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 97; CHALANDON, *Manuel I Comnène*, p. 588; ANGOLD, *Byzantine Empire*, p. 199; MAGDALINO, *Empire*, p. 93.

9 KINNAMOS, p. 283; CHONIATES, p. 172.

At Venice the Doge, Vitale Michiel II, decided upon punitive action. A fleet was prepared and the Venetians appeared at Euripos in Euboea, burning part of the settlement to the ground, and from there they sailed to Chios, where they wintered (1171/72).[10] During their stay at Chios, however, the Venetians contracted plague, their embassies to Manuel seeking an amnesty failed,[11] and though they eluded the Byzantine ships which awaited them off Cape Malea[12] they were not welcome home and the Doge was assassinated in the streets.[13]

It seems that it is this activity in the Aegean that is referred to in the last part of paragraph eleven of our speech. The reference to the Greek islands seems to show this, and we should remember that the occasion of the speech makes it likely that all references in it are to events of the recent past (the last few years).

Dr H. Ahrweiler talks about this paragraph in her book, *Byzance et la Mer*.[14] It evidently describes some form of naval review, seemingly in the form of a mock sea-battle, which would have been fresh in the memories of those who listened to Eustathios. The wording makes it clear that this was a new fleet, as it was "not yet fully equipped" and "had left (Constantinople) at no time". We should therefore discount Dr. Ahrweiler's theory that the passage refers to a review of the fleet which had been prepared two years previously to deal with the nuisance of the Venetians in the Aegean. It must refer to a review of a fleet which was being prepared to go to Ancona, the only occasion in recent history when such a special fleet would have been put together.[15] But what did it do there? That is another matter.

---

10 KINNAMOS, pp. 283–284; NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 98.

11 NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 98–99.

12 KINNAMOS, pp. 284–285; CHONIATES, p. 173.

13 NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice*, p. 100.

14 H. AHRWEILER, *Byzance et la Mer*, Paris 1966, pp. 257–262.

15 Note that given the mention of this naval review, one would be inclined to date the speech to 1175, for Eustathios says that the review took place πέρυσι ("a year ago", "last year"). The second oration of Eustathios referred to in this paper is a better candidate for the 1174 Epiphany oration, so I first assumed that the meaning of πέρυσι had been slightly stretched to refer to a period of 15–22 months before. The precise date of the speech is in dispute, but it postdates the siege of Ancona and predates the disaster at Myriokephalon in Anatolia of the campaigning season of 1176. Therefore the speech is to be dated to either 1174, 1175 or 1176. Magdalino supports a date of 1176, Regel, whose edition of the oration I am using, a date of December 6 (St Nicholas' Day), 1174 and Tafel, who produced the first edition of this oration a date of 1174 or 1175. I shall be arguing for a date of 1176 in my forthcoming commentary on the two orations.

We have both Greek and Latin accounts of the siege of Ancona in 1173. It was alluded to not only by Eustathios here, and in an earlier speech, which we can probably date to January 6, 1174,[16] but by both Niketas Choniates and John Kinnamos, and at greater length by a Florentine, Magister Boncompagnus, to whom I shall refer by his Italian name, Buoncompagno.[17] He wrote a book in Latin on the siege, which he revised in 1201. Other Italian writers also allude briefly to the siege, the most useful being Marangone,[18] who says that forty Venetian galleys were involved. John Kinnamos and Buoncompagno also mention that the Venetian navy took part, but Niketas Choniates does not mention them. All sources agree, however, that the city was surrounded on the landward side by a force of Germans who had descended into Italy to put Ancona under siege, and that this was commanded by a bishop, who is named by Buoncompagno as Frederick I's chancellor, Christian of Mainz.

Both the Venetians and Frederick Barbarossa had good reason to bring the Anconitans to heel. The Anconitans and the Venetians were old trading rivals, and the Anconitans had benefited from the suspension of Venetian trading rights within the Byzantine Empire in 1171. They may even have practiced piracy against Venetian ships. The German emperor on the other hand distrusted a city which had a long-standing affiliation with the Byzantines. Indeed, Ancona had been the point from which the Byzantines invaded Apulia in 1155–56. It was in Barbarossa's interests to change Ancona's allegiance to the Holy Roman Empire.

When exactly did the siege take place? Buoncompagno asserts that the year was 1172, but it is now generally accepted that he is wrong. The year was 1173, and the siege lasted for some seven months, from April 1 to mid-October. The most important evidence for its date is presented by Carile, who wrote a paper in Italian on the siege,[19] and argues for the year being

---

16 W. REGEL, "VI," in *Fontes Rerum Byzantinarum*, St Petersburg 1892, pp. 92–125.

17 Buoncampagno di SEGNI, *Liber de obsidione Anconae a copiis Friderici I Imperatoris*, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, VI, ed. L.A. MURATORI, cols. 919–946.

18 B. MARANGONE, "Annales Pisani," in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, I, ed. J.M. TARTINI, cols. 311–842.

19 A. CARILE, "Federico Barbarossa, i Veneziani e l'assedio di Ancona del 1173. Contributo alla storia politica e sociale della città nel secolo XII," *StVen* 16, 1974, pp. 3–31; see also D. ABULAFIA, "Ancona, Byzantium and the Adriatic," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 52, 1984, pp. 195–216; P. SCHREINER, "Der Dux von Dalmatien und die Belagerung Anconas

1173 quite succinctly, pointing not only to this speech of Eustathius but considering the itinerary of the German bishop over 1172–73. The only time when he could have been besieging Ancona was in the middle of the latter year.

Our sources also concentrate on the role of a certain William, Count of Marchisella (not mentioned by Kinnamos) and Aldruda Frangipane, Countess of Bertinoro, two local magnates, in the raising of the siege, and they certainly seem to have been important players.

So far I have not mentioned the role of the Byzantine Greeks. There is, however, evidence that they played a part, if perhaps a relatively minor one. This evidence was adduced by Dr. Ahrweiler, who refers to a note in a Paris manuscript, as recorded in M. Montfaucon's *Palaeographia Graeca* .[20] It is an obituary of the *sebastos* Constantine Doukas, whom the emperor had sent to Italy to deal with the emergency. He plays a minor role in Buoncompagno's account, merely making a rousing speech and promising to underwrite the expenses of raising the siege, but this note says:

> On the 8th April, indiction 2, the year 6687 (= 1179) the *sebastos* Constantine Doukas died; sent by the emperor to the defence (φυλακή) of Ancona during the siege of the town by the forces of the Venetians, he succeeded in organising the troops and over seven months raised several battalions; returning conqueror, having entirely destroyed the whole army of the land of the Germans and all the Venetian forces, he returned to the emperor's presence, who made him leader of the army, governor of all of Dioclea and Dalamatia, of Spalato and Durazzo.

Both our Byzantine historians fail to mention Constantine Doukas, but Marangone is a little more helpful, saying that: "unable to defend the city of Ancona, he went forth and prepared a great army as quickly as possible. and expelled the aforementioned *cancellarius* (i.e., Christian of Mainz) from the siege." All Buoncompagno says is that Constantine had been sent "to procure cities". This modest evidence leads us to suppose that Constantine Doukas was instrumental in procuring aid and organising the forces which came to aid Ancona. Naturally the obituary in the Paris manuscript is inclined to exaggerate his role.

But now to the problem raised by the specific mention in Eustathios's speech of a large naval force. To what end was it prepared? The orator specifically says that the force was prepared "last year", and the only major

---

im Jahre 1173. Zur Italien- und Balkanpolitik Manuels I," *Byzantion* 41, 1971, pp. 285–311.

20 Paris 1708; the relevant extract is reproduced in CARILE, "L'Assedio".

historical event of recent years in which it could have been employed was the siege of Ancona. The fleet evidently did not see action against the Venetian raiders in the Adriatic. Now Kinnamos attributes the victory against the Venetians to the Countess of Bertinoro's leadership. None of our sources mention the intervention of a Byzantine fleet, but the second speech mentioning Ancona which I referred to earlier does mention a naval battle and a naval victory "over in an instant".[21] That speech focuses on the noble resistance of the Anconitans, their loyalty to the emperor and the role that Aldruda Frangipane, referred to as an "Amazon", had in relieving the siege.

We are left then to form a hypothesis which could account for all the facts. The only explanation which removes the difficulties is to say that a large Byzantine fleet was prepared, that it did appear off Ancona, and that there were only one or more minor skirmishes. Surely a major naval victory would have been recorded by our Byzantine historians; a minor skirmish could be represented as a "victory" by the conventions of panegyric. Anyway, once the siege on land had been raised, there was no point in the Venetians staying; perhaps they slipped quietly away once their German allies had been defeated.

This is the state of my researches into the siege of Ancona of 1173. It can be seen that Eustathios' 1174 and 1176 Epiphany orations are helpful in supplementing our other sources with historical detail.

Eustathios of Thessaloniki: *Oration for Manuel I*, paragraphs 9–11.[22]

9. But I will set out in a detailed narrative also the things which the Adriatic scum, the amphibious serpent, the marsh-dwelling frog, and particularly (that I might not give men names from among their ill-fortune), the things which the piratical race from the Adriatic, the treacherous, evil-plotting one, planned, but it remained undone; and where they conceived, they did not bring their plans to completion but had great pain in vain. And where they plotted, not only did they not bring their plots to a conclusion, but saw their schemes upset in many places, particularly in what Ancona overturned for them.

10. I will also not be silent about the things which we applauded at the time when we celebrated the holy festival, about the great sea-monster, the

---

21 Ed. W. REGEL, "VI," pp. 104/6–8, 109/13–14.

22 Ed. W. REGEL, "III," in *Fontes Rerum Byzantinarum*, I, St Petersburg 1892, pp. 36–39.

new Typhon, how he wanted to be shaken up from afar and to make a roaring noise, and come belching in a wave over our land. But he was not able to do this; the fear of the Emperor, like a deep darkness, falling before his sight, something which occurs to even heavier sea-monsters, forced the beast to remain in its accustomed haunts. But when just now it was shaken up from the west by a guide with ignoble courage, just as I suppose also the sea-beast sends before the voyage a very trifling little fish as leader, it bristled with a few scales, offering a defence against naval weapons, and it revealed something of its dorsal fin, lifting up its head more boldly, and danced in vain triumph over the city nurtured by waves, and it also puffed something out in false pretension. But in a little while its leader on the journey, the boldness which guided it, went away: and the darkness of cowardice entered instead, and having spread more deeply, made it return, without capturing its prey, and it was not even completely reestablished in its native abode, to which it was restricted after having being dashed here and there. What, indeed, O ye who are present, would that beast suffer, thus experiencing evil at its own hands on account of the things which it dreads, if our actions are laid on him besides? Indeed in all ways there is a need for another native Etna under which this Typhonian evil will fall. But what it will suffer, the right moment will show, and will give us the occasion for a great and beautiful speech.

11. I shall also interweave with these yet another marvellous thing, those ships of war, which although last year were not yet completely and magnificently equipped, were arrayed in the strait. And the strait itself was spread beneath them in a smooth calm: but they began to dance the war-dance, as it were, and being driven with a roaring sounded forth greatly and shouted fearful cries, with which, at the right moment, they will dance in triumph over their enemies. I will measure also their multitude as impossible to utter, consisting of cavalry transports, of light vessels, of triremes and of other types of ship. And my audience will be amazed at these things also. But time will shatter them more, when they have learned that only yesterday the place which had been arranged for safety embraced those warlike ships, empty of equipment and other things, and such things as make them sail speedily, and without even a sign of their crews, neither those which urge them on their voyage, nor those who make war. And it was thus yesterday. But from the east day shone forth, and the imperial command was given, as was fitting, and the empty spaces were filled with triremes, and the dockyards were made empty; the harbours lay bare and those watching were mute with astonishment and the Propontis no longer showed anything by way of water. Someone would have said that our sea was vying with

Megalopolis, packed with these movable houses in the same way that the latter is with structures. There was at that time an appearance of a great sea-battle, a blast of trumpets, a tight straining of oars, deployments of running troops, shouts of ship-commanders, a gleaming of weapons, and the enclosure for the sea-fight in no way lacked a battle, except that they were not face-to-face with the enemy. And the wounds which they suffered I will add as an appendage to this exposition, and the fact that this assembly was not foreign, nor the organisation from a foreign land, but this army was indigenous, one of many from the mainland and a nurseling to the greatest of the cities and leaving it at no time: and the ships were from the neighbouring area, around which someone will run quickly in the space of one day's sun. I may say such things, and those listening will be shattered and amazed not only at the royal forethought there but also at his omnipotence and they will recognise the greatness of his plans from this wonderful improvisation of the emperor, and will consider what his long-term preparations are like, if his improvisations are of such a kind. What would he not do, if he could overthrow in wrestling with this one hand the one set against him, even if he were arrayed against a hundred-handed giant? And even if one wave flows disastrously over the enemy, what would happen to them if they fall beneath many warlike waves sent by the emperor? They will reckon up these things and totally shout out "Woe!" for the race which has planned to stand up against such an emperor who at the same time nodded, and it was done: he has spoken, and his commands are carried out. They also judge to be ridiculous those men, who looking at the whole land bowing under the royal power themselves behave boldly, applying themselves to ruling the sea and the islands, as if he did not claim the islands also under the name of "land", so that he left them out of his reckoning, or even led these men away from the sea they desired, or went down to the depth, which thing they will also suffer, since they had no share in anything, not even the island land washed on both sides, where our emperor is monarch of the whole land, after God.

SOCIETY AND COURT: 4

MORALITY VERSUS POLITICS AT THE BYZANTINE COURT: THE CHARGES AGAINST MARIE OF ANTIOCH AND EUPHROSYNE

Lynda Garland / University of New England

This paper looks at the position of two empresses accused of non-conformist behaviour in the twelfth century, and, in so doing, attempts to evaluate to some degree the attitudes towards "the non-conformist", particularly the female non-conformist, in twelfth-century Byzantium and the ways in which perceptions of non-conformity could affect the status of that individual as well as the society and politics of the time.

Non-conformity is, of course, the way that society labels those who do not "conform" to certain perceived standards or norms of behaviour; inevitably such a perception of "non-conformity" brings with it the disapproval of society, and sometimes in a tangible and unpleasant form. Where women are concerned such non-conformity can frequently concern society's perception of female sexuality; behaviour connected with this sexuality is labelled as "outside" of society's norms and thus unacceptable in terms of contemporary behavioural conventions.[1] And often, female sexuality is regarded as non-conformist because it is seen in a context not confined to within the household, but affecting a wider audience. This not unnaturally is the case when the women involved possess political power: such influence is in itself traditionally seen as non-conformist in terms of gender-specific roles within the dominant ideology, and their sexuality is considered to interfere with their status as rulers and imperial administrators to the detriment of the empire.

Here we are concerned primarily with the activities of two imperial empress-consorts in the twelfth century and the ways in which the populace and court (including their own families) perceived their activities. We also

---

1 For the life and ideology of Byzantine women in the last centuries of Byzantium, see esp. A.E. LAIOU, "Observations on the Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women," *ByzF* 9, 1985, pp. 59–102; for the empress' social and political freedom, see S. RUNCIMAN, "Women in Byzantine Aristocratic Society," in M. ANGOLD (ed.), *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries*, Oxford 1984, pp. 10–22; L. GARLAND, "The Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women: A Further Note on Conventions of Behaviour and Social Reality as Reflected in Eleventh and Twelfth Century Historical Sources," *Byzantion* 58, 1988, pp. 361–393.

look at the reactions which their behaviour provoked and the consequent impact on imperial government. Of these empresses one, Marie of Antioch, was a westerner by birth, and thus *per se* outside the normal Byzantine framework of class and society, with no family to rally to her defence; she was also in the position of regent for a young son and thus *de facto* ruler of the empire. The other, Euphrosyne Kamaterissa Doukaina, though born within an influential Byzantine family, was a non-conformist in terms of her dominance over a weak and ineffectual husband, and thus another *de facto* ruler of the empire, as well as "unconventional" and arrogant in her demeanour. Both of these ladies were deliberately accused of sexual misconduct in order to threaten their position; in both cases, however, it will be argued, the attack was primarily politically motivated, rather than inspired by moral considerations, and deliberately contrived, by bureaucrats and members of the imperial family, to undercut their control of government.

The charges against Marie of Antioch and Euphrosyne in the twelfth century were not unprecedented: adultery was not a new feature of the Byzantine court, nor was criticism of an empress's behaviour. *In theory*, of course, adultery (like fornication) was one of the most heinous crimes in both canon and civil law. The twelfth century canonist Theodore Balsamon, for example, so highly valued the holy state of matrimony that he considered adultery on the wife's part to be the only suitable grounds for divorce. He viewed fornication, too, as one of the more deadly sins, as well as denouncing all kinds of sexual deviationists and non-conformists in his strictures against homosexuality, unnatural vice, incest, marriage within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity, seduction, rape, abduction, divorce, remarriage, uncanonical betrothals and all improper and indecent behaviour (such as unseemly dancing and jollification at marriage celebrations, and mixed bathing).[2] But, despite the official rulings of canon law it had not been unusual for men of the imperial family to be described as openly keeping mistresses at court and pursuing extra-marital affairs with women from aristocratic families. In fact, the learned and respected ruler Leo VI "the Wise" (886–912) had come into conflict with the Orthodox establishment and patriarch only when he wished to make his mistress Zoe Karbonopsina his fourth wife, a decision primarily aimed at legitimising their son Constantine, and until this point the liaison itself, like his previous relationships, was implicitly tolerated by the church and its representatives, even though Leo

---

2 BALSAMON, *Canones*, PG 137, 697–708, 775–780, 808–813, 853–861, 1167–1173, 1377–1380, 1412; PG 138, 607–612, 621–625, 659–676. See esp. J. BEAUCHAMP, "La situation juridique de la femme à Byzance," *CahCM* 20, 1977, pp. 145–176.

himself had legislated against divorce, remarriage and sexual deviationism.[3] The Byzantine church, in fact, reserved its criticism for sins against marriage itself, not against extra-marital relationships. Hence major issues were the Moechian controversy, when in 795 Constantine VI divorced Mary of Amnia to marry Theodote, one of his mother's ladies-in-waiting, and the Tetragamy scandal, in which Leo VI was excommunicated for contracting a fourth marriage despite the fact that Zoe had for some years previously been his mistress and had born him his only son in 905.[4]

Empresses, as well as aristocratic women, could be involved in such "non-conformist" behaviour. In the eleventh century Zoe Porphyrogenita was the prime example of an empress who openly indulged in extra-marital affairs and these were tolerated by her courtiers, her first husband, her subjects and even the patriarch. While Zoe was the only empress in her own right during the eleventh and twelfth centuries (apart from her sister Theodora who shared power with her for three months) and the only married empress who indulged openly in illicit liaisons, it is significant that the eleventh and twelfth centuries provide further proof that certain royal women had a relative freedom of choice as to their husbands or lovers: instances are Eudokia Makrembolitissa's choice of Romanos Diogenes (1068–71) as her second husband (though it is interesting that she felt compelled to keep her decision secret to avoid conflict with the bureaucracy), and the rumours of an intrigue between the Empress Maria of Alania and Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118) prior to his accession. In addition Choniates reports diverting accounts of the relationships of the influential and attractive nieces of Manuel I Komnenos (1143–80) — who were also the cousins of Andronikos I Komnenos (1183–85), who features largely in their adventures. And finally, accusations of misconduct were brought against the empress-regent, Marie of Antioch, Manuel's widow, and the empress-consort, Euphrosyne, wife of Alexios III Angelos (1195–1203). Thus, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries several imperial women were seen as behaving in a manner at variance with Byzantine social conventions, in short as "non-conformists".

---

3 P. NOAILLES & A. DAIN (ed. & tr.), *Les Novelles de Léon le Sage*, Paris 1944, nos. 22, 31, 32, 74, 90, 106, 109, 111 and 112; K. FLEDELIUS, "Woman's Position and Possibilities in Byzantine Society, with particular reference to the Novels of Leo VI," *JÖB* 32(2), 1982, pp. 430–431.

4 See esp. P. HENRY, "The Moechian Controversy and the Constantinopolitan Synod of January A.D. 809," *JThS* 20, 1969, pp. 495–522; P.J. ALEXANDER, "Religious Persecution and Resistance in the Byzantine Empire of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries: Methods and Justifications," *Speculum* 52, 1977, pp. 238–264.

Zoe and her liaisons at court, however, should not be considered in the same context as the accusations of sexual misconduct towards the late twelfth century empresses. While she had three husbands and, apparently, a number of lovers all after her forty-eighth year, thus demonstrating the freedom of behaviour possible at the Byzantine court, her conduct did not affect the people's fervent loyalty and protective attitude towards her or their belief in her as "τὴν ἀρχέγονον καὶ κληρονόμον καὶ ἡμετέραν μητέρα Ζωήν".[5] Despite her conduct she remained the darling of the people of the capital, protected by their belief in her ancestral heritage.[6] Zoe's position was, of course, unique — as second daughter of Constantine VIII, though well into middle-age she was married by her father on his death bed to Romanos III Argyros (1028–34); she chose for herself two other husbands, Michael IV the Paphlagonian (1034–41) and Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–55) and an adopted son, Michael V Kalaphates (1041–42) and, in addition, reigned briefly for a few months in her own right, from April to June 1042, with her younger sister Theodora. She is portrayed as having made the most of her unusual social freedom to challenge the conventions of behaviour and morality prescribed for women in all ranks of life. The Constantinopolitans seem to have recognised that her conduct was to be governed by different standards from those which related to the rest of Byzantine society, and she was apostrophised by the women, who poured into the streets to protest about her treatment by Michael V, in the following terms: "Where can she be," they cried, "she who alone is noble of heart and alone is beautiful? Where can she be, she who alone of all women

---

5 SKYLITZES, *Ioannis Scylitae Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. J. THURN, Berlin 1973, p. 418 (= E. BEKKER, *Ioannis Scylitae Synopsis Historiarum*, 2 vols., CSHB 1838–39, p. 537); see also PSELLOS, *Michel Psellos. Chronographie*, V, 25–26, 29–30, 32–33 (ed. & tr. É. RENAULD, Paris 1926–28, I, pp. 101–106); ibid., 25: "ἡ δέ γε ξύμπασα Πόλις, λέγω δὲ πᾶν γένος καὶ τύχην καὶ ἡλικίαν ... κατὰ μέρη τινὰ συγκινεῖσθαι καὶ διαταράττεσθαι ἤρχετο"; ATTALEIATES, *Michaelis Attaliotae Historia*, ed. E. BEKKER, CSHB 1853, pp. 13–14; ZONARAS, *Epitome historiarum*, XVII, 18–19, ed. M. PINDER & M. BÜTTNER-WOBST, III, CSHB 1897, pp. 605–612.

6 For Zoe as the heir to the Byzantine empire and ruler in her own right, see B. HILL, L. JAMES & D. SMYTHE, "Zoe: the Rhythm Method of Imperial Renewal," in P. MAGDALINO (ed.), *New Constantines: the Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries*, Aldershot 1994, pp. 215–229. Note esp. the conduct of the populace when they thought the position of Zoe and Theodora ("αἱ μάνναι ἡμῶν αἱ πορφυρογέννητοι") to be threatened by Constantine IX's mistress Skleraina: SKYLITZES, p. 434 (CSHB, p. 556).

is free, the mistress of all the imperial family, the rightful heir to the Empire...," a description which may well refer to her unique social liberty within the court as well as to her constitutional position.[7]

After so many years spent in the women's quarters with her younger sister Theodora, whom she cordially disliked,[8] Zoe's marriage at her father's death-bed to the elderly city prefect (eparch) Romanos Argyros must have seemed the gateway to a new future. However, when foiled in the hope of children he neglected her for other women and, still worse, gave her an inadequate allowance, her affection for him turned to hatred.[9] Her affair with Michael (IV) the Paphlagonian, thirty years her junior, during Romanos' lifetime was a matter of public knowledge at court, and even Romanos himself was aware of it.[10] The courtiers of the time also knew of her clandestine meetings with Constantine (IX) Monomachos, which gave rise to slanderous gossip, and in addition she was said to have entered into an affair with Constantine Katepanos.[11] Zoe's capacity for instant infatuation, according to her historians, was remarkable. At first sight of the handsome young Michael the Paphlagonian her eyes "burned with a fire as dazzling as

---

7 "Ποῦ ποτε ... ἡ μόνη καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν εὐγενὴς, καὶ τὴν μορφὴν εὐειδής; ποῦ ποτε ἡ μόνη τῶν πασῶν ἐλευθέρα, ἡ τοῦ ξύμπαντος γένους δεσπότις ..." (PSELLOS, V, 26 (RENAULD I, p. 102); trans. E.R.A. SEWTER, *Michael Psellus. Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, Harmondsworth 1966, pp. 138–139). The comment is significant in the women's reference to the constitutional position of the empress, "not words one would expect from women who had spent their entire lives in the women's quarters as Psellos would have us believe" (A.E. LAIOU, "The Festival of 'Agathe': Comments on the Life of Constantinopolitan Women," in *Βυζάντιον. Ἀφιέρωμα στον Ἀνδρέα Στράτο*, I, Athens 1986, pp. 118–119).

8 For Zoe's jealousy of Theodora, and Theodora's banishment from the palace and tonsuring, see SKYLITZES, pp. 375, 377, 385, 422 (CSHB, pp. 486–488, 498, 540–541); PSELLOS, V, 34–35, 46, 51 (RENAULD I, pp. 107–108, 113, 116); ZONARAS, XVII, 11 (CSHB, III, pp. 574–575); cf. ATTALEIATES, p. 18.

9 PSELLOS, III, 6, 17 (RENAULD I, pp. 35, 44); cf. ZONARAS, XVII, 13 (CSHB, III, pp. 582–583) for Zoe's attempts at producing a family and her sexual proclivities. For the extent to which the upper classes and officials in Constantinople may have copied the profligacy of the imperial court, see M.J. KYRIAKIS, "Medieval European Society as Seen in Two Eleventh-Century Texts of Michael Psellos: III," *BS/EB* 4(2), 1977, pp. 175–177.

10 PSELLOS, III, 21, 23 (RENAULD I, pp. 47–49); cf., for Michael IV, ZONARAS, XVII, 13 (CSHB, III, p. 583).

11 PSELLOS, VI, 16 (RENAULD I, pp. 125–126); SKYLITZES, pp. 422–423 (CSHB, pp. 541–542). Cf. ZONARAS, XVII, 20 (CSHB, III, pp. 614–615); ATTALEIATES, p. 18.

the young man's beauty and she at once fell victim to his charm. From some mystic union between them she conceived a love for him."[12] Psellos ridicules Zoe over her total disregard of conventional standards of female delicacy and decency, while Skylitzes describes her passion as little short of demonic ("πρὸς τοῦτον ἡ βασιλὶς ἔρωτα δαιμονιώδη σχοῦσα καὶ μανικόν").[13]

While the liaison was in progress, the fifty-four year old empress and Michael were frequently discovered sleeping together by various people, and even found holding assignations in the throne room itself, and Zoe was totally indiscreet, making no secret of the fact that Michael was practically emperor already. Indeed, little could be kept secret in the palace, though Psellos comments that at the *inception* of the affair most people knew nothing about it, while Skylitzes suggests that the relationship and Zoe's infatuation were generally kept fairly quiet, and that their assignations were held in secret; Zonaras, on the other hand, states that all the intimate details of the intrigue were whispered not only within the palace itself but at the very crossroads of the capital.[14] Zoe's conduct towards the future Michael IV deeply shocked her courtiers, not only because she was already married, but because her indiscretion so obviously transcended the bounds of propriety. Apart from their being found sleeping together, Zoe gave Michael valuable presents of rings and garments of gold cloth, seated him on the throne with a sceptre and on one occasion with the imperial crown itself, and was seen kissing and embracing him.[15]

Zoe was even suspected of murder, and it was rumoured that she had been slowly poisoning her first husband with drugs, and that he was drowned in his bath by Michael's attendants, because she was becoming impatient for his death.[16] Whatever the truth of this, her show of grief only lasted until

---

12 PSELLOS, III, 18 (RENAULD I, p. 45; trans. SEWTER, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, p. 76); SKYLITZES, p. 390 (CSHB, p. 504); ZONARAS, XVII, 13 (CSHB, III, p. 582).

13 PSELLOS, III, 19–20 (RENAULD I, pp. 45–46); SKYLITZES, p. 390 (CSHB, pp. 504–505).

14 PSELLOS, III, 18 (RENAULD I, pp. 45); SKYLITZES, p. 390 (CSHB, pp. 504–505); ZONARAS, XVII, 13 (CSHB, III, p. 583); Kekaumenos considered gossip about the emperor and his affairs to be extremely unwise (G. OSTROGORSKY, "Observations on the Aristocracy in Byzantium," *DOP* 25, 1971, pp. 31–32), which in itself implies that such speculation and rumour took place.

15 PSELLOS, III, 20 (RENAULD I, pp. 46–47).

16 PSELLOS, III, 26 (RENAULD I, pp. 50–52); SKYLITZES, p. 390 (CSHB, p. 505); ZONARAS, XVII, 13 (CSHB, III, pp. 584–585).

she was certain that he was dying, and, against all propriety, she did not even bother to be present at his death, which took place on 11 April (Good Friday) 1034, marrying Michael immediately (despite the advice of her courtiers) and having him crowned emperor, the patriarch, Alexios the Studite, making little opposition to this second marriage and Michael's immediate coronation.[17]

Nevertheless, Zoe, as one of the last two representatives of the Macedonian house, was championed and protected by the people. Despite the fact that both the courtiers and the populace seem to have been well aware of what was going on, her conduct remained unchecked. Empress-consorts were not, however, viewed with such indulgence, a case in point being Zoe's own grandmother, Theophano, the wife of both Romanos II (959–63) and Nikephoros II Phokas (963–69), and mother of the first two emperors of the eleventh century Basil II (976–1025) and his younger brother Constantine VIII (1025–28). Theophano was accused, almost certainly quite unjustly, of having poisoned her first husband and her father-in-law, Constantine Porphyrogenitos, and of having betrayed her second husband to assassins hired by her lover John Tzimiskes. Because of her involvement in this murder she was exiled, though her infamous reputation, including the tales of her sexual promiscuity, was possibly not deserved.[18] Zoe's behaviour thus has parallels in the historical accounts of other Byzantine empresses, but it can not be taken as a paradigm for that allowed of empresses generally: empress-consorts were not allowed the same licence as that given to Zoe. Clearly, however, life at court could be the scene of much licentious behaviour and the imperial court in the eleventh century seems to have been at times greatly given to luxury and dissipation. The conduct of Eudokia Makrembolitissa as regent for her son Michael VII Doukas, in her preoccupation with affairs of state rather than "voluptuous emotions", was thought by Psellos to be praiseworthy in being unexpected,[19] while the court was criticised by Anna Komnene for its depravity and immorality from the time of Constantine IX Monomachos until her own father's accession in 1081 ("τὴν δὲ περὶ τὰ βασίλεια

---

17 PSELLOS, III, 26; IV, 1 (RENAULD I, pp. 50–53). For the marriage and coronation, see ibid., IV, 1–3 (RENAULD I, pp. 53–54); SKYLITZES, pp. 390–391 (CSHB, p. 505); ZONARAS, XVII, 14 (CSHB, III, pp. 585–586).

18 For Theophano, see Ch. DIEHL, *Byzantine Empresses*, trans. H. BELL & T.T. de KERPELY, New York 1964, pp. 114–135; R.H.J. JENKINS, *Byzantium. The Imperial Centuries A.D. 610-1071*, London 1966, pp. 270, 276–278, 289–290, who suggests (ibid. 302) that Basil II might possibly have been Theophano's son by one of the Varangian guard.

19 PSELLOS, VII, 4 (RENAULD II, p. 154).

γυναικωνῖτιν παντάπασι διεφθορυῖαν ... καὶ εἰς ἔρωτας ἀλόγους ἀποκλίνασαν...”). Anna's indomitable grandmother, Anna Dalassene, took pains to eradicate all traces of such depravity as soon as her son seized power, and according to her granddaughter the palace thenceforth enjoyed discipline and moral restraint to the extent that it rather resembled a monastery than a court.[20] Nevertheless, this moral reformation of the court seems to have had little, if any, permanent effect. When her grandson, John II Komnenos, came to the throne only thirty-seven years later, he was said to have swept the palace clean of all immorality and extravagance, prohibiting throughout his reign all filthy talk, ostentation in hairstyles and footwear, gluttony, and indecorous behaviour generally.[21] This may of course reflect a general expectation on the part of emperors that they should be seen to restore traditional values, and on the part of the populace that the imperial court should be the focus of both extravagance and immorality. However, promiscuity, epicureanism and an ostentatious and voluptuary lifestyle were certainly features of later reigns, notably those between 1143 and 1204, and it was generally accepted that emperors and other men of the imperial family, regardless of age, interests and marital status, should keep one or more mistresses and as acknowledge the illegitimate children of such liaisons. Despite the prevalent double standard of morality, by which delinquencies for which women were condemned were tolerated in men, such liaisons very frequently concern women of the imperial family. Manuel I Komnenos is described as living openly and ostentatiously with his arrogant niece Theodora, nor was Theodora his only mistress.[22] Manuel's cousin, Andronikos I Komnenos enjoyed several long-standing liaisons during Manuel's reign with Eudokia, Theodora's sister, in 1154–1155,[23] and with their cousin Theodora, daughter of Manuel's brother Isaac the sebastokrator and widow of Baldwin III of Jerusalem (who died in 1163); this affair commenced in 1167 and the couple were still together in 1180.[24]

---

20 ANNA KOMNENE, *Anne Comnène, Alexiade*, III, viii, 2, ed. & tr. B. LEIB, Paris 1937–45 (repr. 1967), I, p. 125; cf. THEOPHYLACT, “Oratio in Alexium Comnenum,” PG 126, cols. 301–304.

21 CHONIATES, *Niketae Choniatae Historia*, ed. J.A. van DIETEN, Berlin & New York 1975, pp. 46-47 (= E. BEKKER, *Niketae Choniatae Historia*, CSHB 1835, p. 63); M. ANGOLD. *The Byzantine Empire 1025–1204. A Political History*, London & New York 1984, p. 134.

22 CHONIATES, p. 204, 226 cf. 54 (CSHB, pp. 266, 295, 73).

23 CHONIATES, pp. 104–105, 132 (CSHB, pp. 136–138, 173). Andronikos Komnenos was the son of Isaac, a brother of John II.

24 KINNAMOS, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio [sic] Comnenis Gestarum*, VI, 1, ed. A. MEINEKE, CSHB 1836, pp. 250–251;

Andronikos had also had an affair prior to this in 1167 with Manuel's sister-in-law, Philippa of Antioch,[25] while he openly consorted with prostitutes while emperor,[26] despite his marriage in 1183 with the adolescent Agnes-Anna, the widow of his murdered predecessor Alexios II.[27] Illegitimate children could also be a feature of everyday life at the Byzantine court and play a prominent part in Byzantine society, the most notable of these being Alexios, Manuel's son by Theodora. Alexios was even given the highest of all rank and titles, sebastokrator and Caesar, presumably emphasising if not his right to the succession, at least his high status at court, doubtless because Manuel had no legitimate son before September 1169. According to Choniates, Alexios greatly resembled his father in height, intelligence, affability, features and expression, which implies that his parentage was widely recognised.[28] His cousins, another Alexios and Eirene, were the illegitimate children of Andronikos I Komnenos by another niece of Manuel's called Theodora. The fact that the expediency of the marriage between Eirene and Manuel's illegitimate son Alexios in 1183 was hotly debated by the clergy (Choniates suggests that Andronikos resorted to threats and whole-scale bribery to induce the holy synod to agree to its legality), and led to the resignation of the patriarch Theodosios Boradiotes, shows that the birth of both participants was widely known, since the discussion concerning whether their marriage was uncanonical centred round the fact that their mothers were first cousins. Indeed, it appears that their union, which was celebrated by the visiting archbishop of Bulgaria, was eventually permitted

---

CHONIATES, pp. 141–142, 226 (CSHB, pp. 184–186, 294–295); WILLIAM of Tyre, *Historia Rerum in Partibus Transmarinis Gestarum*, XX, 2, in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades. Historiens Occidentaux* (hence R.H.C.Occ.), Paris 1844, I(2), p. 943.

25 KINNAMOS, VI, 1 (CSHB, p. 250); CHONIATES, pp. 139–140 (CSHB, pp. 181–183).

26 For the prostitute Maraptike, see CHONIATES, p. 347, cf. 321–322 (CSHB, pp. 452, 416–417); ROBERT of Clari, *La conquête de Constantinople*, XX–XXI, ed. P. LAUER, Paris 1924, pp. 19–22.

27 CHONIATES, pp. 275–276, 346–348 (CSHB, pp. 356–357, 452); cf. EUSTATHIOS, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki. The Capture of Thessaloniki*, 44, ed. & tr. J.R. Melville JONES, Canberra 1988, p. 52 (= B.G. NIEBUHR, *De Thessalonica Capta*, CSHB 1842, p. 412), who portrays Anna's abhorrence of her husband.

28 CHONIATES, pp. 425–426 (CSHB, pp. 557–558); K. VARZOS, *Ἡ Γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, 2 vols., Thessalonika 1981, 1986, no. 156. Alexios' standing at court may perhaps be compared to that of the Duke of Richmond, illegitimate son of Henry VIII of England, prior to the birth of Edward (VI).

on the grounds that rules usually governing the prohibited degrees of kinship were not applicable to the issue of irregular liaisons.[29]

Concubines and mistresses were a feature of the court of Isaac II Angelos (1185–95/1203–04) and even gave rise to court jests on the topic, when Chalivoures, most noted of the court mimes of the time, misinterpreted the emperor's request for ἅλας (salt) as ἄλλας (other women) and impudently told the emperor to get to know the ladies currently present before summoning any more, a play on words that unfortunately failed to amuse Isaac.[30] His brother and supplanter, Alexios III Angelos (1195–1203), is also blamed by Choniates for the enrichment of courtesans and relatives at the expense of the state;[31] Isaac's son, Alexios IV Angelos (1203–04), was accused by his father Isaac of the worst habits, of having no self-control and of keeping depraved company; and Alexios III's son-in-law, Alexios V Doukas Mourtzouphlos (1204), second husband of Eudokia, Alexios' youngest daughter, was stated by Choniates to have indulged in lechery from his earliest youth.[32]

Emperors, accordingly, were generally perceived as enjoying a hedonistic lifestyle at court. In line with the dual standard of morality current in this as in other societies, empresses could be judged more critically, and popular reactions to behaviour outside the normal canons of female conduct on the part of imperial women greatly depended on the support enjoyed by the lady in question. Psellos' criticism of Eudokia Makrembolitissa, widow of Constantine X Doukas and mother of Michael VII, on her decision late in 1067 to marry Romanos IV Diogenes (1068–71), is evidence for the speculation that could attend the love affairs of a ruling or regent empress,[33] while Zonaras tells a delightful story of how her plan to remarry was blocked by John Xiphilinos, the patriarch, until he was tricked into believing that

---

29 CHONIATES, pp. 260–262, 309, 425–426 (CSHB, pp. 337–339, 401, 556–558). For the official authorisation of their marriage, see V. GRUMEL, *Les regestes des actes du patriarchat de Constantinople III: les regestes de 1043 à 1206*, Chalcedon 1947, N. 1162.

30 CHONIATES, pp. 441–442 (CSHB, p. 580); for further examples of such humour, including mimes, buffoonery and indecent theatrical presentations, see L. GARLAND, "'And His Bald Head Shone Like A Full Moon...': An Appreciation of the Byzantine Sense of Humour as Recorded in Historical Sources of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *Parergon* n.s. 8, 1990, pp. 1–31.

31 CHONIATES, p. 537 (CSHB, p. 712).

32 See CHONIATES, p. 557 (CSHB, p. 736) for Alexios IV; p. 571 (CSHB, p. 755); AKROPOLITES, *Historia*, V, in *Georgii Akropolitae Opera*, I, ed. A. HEISENBERG & P. WIRTH, Stuttgart 1978, pp. 8–9 for Mourtzouphlos.

33 PSELLOS, VII, 4–6 (RENAULD II, pp. 154–155).

Eudokia was in love with his nephew, a dissolute young man called Bardas. It was even thought that Eudokia might marry a third time and Anna Komnene reports that rumours were current that Eudokia had written to Botaneiates suggesting he marry her, or her daughter Zoe; Botaneiates in fact married Maria of Alania, the ex-wife of Michael VII Doukas.[34]

The personal life of this successor and daughter-in-law of Eudokia's, Maria of Alania, also came under public scrutiny when some twelve years later the scandal-mongering tongues of the reign of Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1178–81) did not hesitate to suggest a close relationship between Maria, the emperor's third wife, and Alexios Komnenos.[35] Rumour spoke of a close — perhaps too close — relationship between the empress and her adopted son Alexios, who so assiduously visited her in order to gain her support for his coming military *coup*. Not only had Maria adopted Alexios and granted him frequent private audiences, she also arranged for Alexios' elder brother Isaac to marry her cousin. Significantly, after Alexios' accession, he moved into the palace in which Maria was still residing with all his relations, but without his wife Eirene Doukaina, whose coronation was delayed, contrary to tradition, until a week after his own and which only took place following great pressure from the Doukas family and the patriarch. Alexios was in fact said to be planning to divorce his young wife Eirene in order to make Maria empress for the third time; this remained unproven, nevertheless, the mob clearly noted the situation and felt it its duty to comment on the relationship, and these suspicions are apparent even in Anna Komnene's account.[36] It was in fact spirited opposition from Eirene's family, notably from the powerful Caesar John Doukas, as well as

---

34 ZONARAS, XVIII, 10–11 (CSHB, III, pp. 682–687); cf. PSELLOS, VII, 5 (RENAULD II, pp. 154–155); ATTALEIATES, pp. 92, 99–100, 304; *Alexiad*, III, ii, 5 (LEIB I, p. 108); ANGOLD, *Byzantine Empire*, pp. 20, 55–56.

35 *Alexiad*, II, i, 4–5, II, ii, 1–3; III, i, 2–ii, 2 (LEIB I, pp. 64–68, 104–106); ZONARAS, XVIII, 21 (CSHB, III, pp. 731–733). See also B. LEIB, "Nicéphore III Botaniates (1078–1081) et Marie d'Alanie," *Actes du VIe. Congrès Internationale d'Études Byzantines (1948)*, Paris 1950 (repr. 1978), pp. 129–140.

36 For Alexios' *coup d'état*, see *Alexiad*, II, i–iv (LEIB I, pp. 63–75); cf. ZONARAS, XVIII, 20 (CSHB, III, pp. 724–730); BRYENNIOS, *Nicephori Bryennii Historiarum Quattuor*, pref. 8–9, ed. P. GAUTIER, Brussels 1975, pp. 63–69 (= A. MEINEKE, *Nicephori Bryennii Historiarum Libri IV*, CSHB 1836, pp. 10–13). For Anna's assumption that gossip and story-telling were rife in the capital, see L. GARLAND, "Political Power and the Populace in Byzantium Prior to the Fourth Crusade," *BS* 53(1), 1992, pp. 31–33; *Alexiad*, III, i, 4 (LEIB I, pp. 104–105).

the patriarch, that foiled this divorce and remarriage, rather than any deep public hostility to Maria as such. Naturally, the fact that her protector and co-conspirator became emperor meant that Maria was sheltered from any overt criticism or hostility and indeed Alexios continued for some time to protect Maria's interests.[37]

In the mid-twelfth century the nieces of Manuel Komnenos clearly reflect an unembarrassed approach to extra-marital liaisons, while it is the open nature of the relationships of these princesses with Manuel and Andronikos Komnenos which primarily draws down censure: Choniates, for example, reserves especial condemnation for the ostentation of Andronikos' affair with Eudokia ("ἡ Εὐδοκία ... ἀνοσίως Ἀνδρονίκῳ συνήρχετο, οὐ κρύβδην, ἀλλ' ἀνέδην"), which so incensed her family that they attempted to assassinate him.[38] This behaviour, however, did not affect the standing of the princesses involved and they were able to marry well despite these relationships with their relatives. In 1148 Manuel perhaps arranged for his mistress Theodora to marry Heinrich Jasomirgott, later Duke of Austria and one of the leaders of the disastrous Second Crusade,[39] and we hear of Theodora with her husband later undertaking a diplomatic mission in 1166 to

---

37 *Alexiad*, IX, viii, 2 (LEIB II, p. 179); ZONARAS, XVIII, 24 (CSHB, III, pp. 746–747); and see M. MULLETT, "The 'Disgrace' of the Ex-Basilissa Maria," *BS* 45, 1984, pp. 202–211. For Anna Komene's eulogistic portrait of Maria, see *Alexiad*, III, ii, 4 (LEIB I, pp. 107–108); cf. PSELLOS, VII, 9 (RENAULD II, p. 177) for Psellos' eulogy of Maria, while she was married to Michael VII Doukas.

38 CHONIATES, pp. 104–105 (CSHB, p. 136–138). For Andronikos as "*the* rebel outsider" in Choniates' *History*, see D.C. Smythe, "Outsiders by *Taxis*: Perceptions of Non-Conformity in Eleventh and Twelfth-Century Literature," *supra* p. 242. Note Andronikos' quip to Manuel (and others) that *he* was only sleeping with his cousin's daughter, but *Manuel* was sleeping with his own niece: CHONIATES, p. 104.

39 KINNAMOS, V, 12 (CSHB, p. 236); L. GARLAND, "Conformity and Licence at the Byzantine Court in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries: the Case of Imperial Women," in *Bosphoros - Court, City and Country in Byzantium: Festschrift for Cyril Mango*, Hakkert 1995 (forthcoming). Alternatively Theodora, after her affair with Manuel, may have married Nikephoros Chalouphes: P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, pp. 210, 548; VARZOS, *Ἡ Γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, nos. 131, 150; cf. KINNAMOS, V, 8.

reconcile the German emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa, with Manuel.[40] Eudokia, too, married well, into the family of the Gabrades, one of the more notable families of the military aristocracy, being apparently recently wed in 1164–65. At the commencement of her intrigue with Andronikos, she was already a widow, as Choniates states her to have been cheated by death of the "husband of her maidenhood", and Michael Gabras, who suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Hungarians in 1166, was thus her second husband.[41]

Nevertheless, despite the existence of these open liaisons indulged in by Byzantine princesses who were prepared to "non-conform" in terms of conventional morality,[42] the situation was very different when it involved women who married into the imperial family. Against ladies in the position of empress-consort or regent the accusation of immorality could be used very effectively. The standing of empresses in the late twelfth century was markedly different to that enjoyed by Zoe, and empress-consorts who were accused of such conduct were put in a position whereby they were not only subject to popular criticism, but ran the risk of being removed from power and government and even of losing their lives over the issue.

We must now turn to the charges against Marie of Antioch and Euphrosyne. Early in 1181 Marie, widow of Manuel I Komnenos (who died in September 1180), who had been left as regent for her eleven year old son Alexios II, was attacked by wide-spread rumours stating that she was conducting an affair with Alexios the protosebastos. Alexios was Manuel's nephew and had been protovestiarios (titular head of the imperial household) since 1176.[43] Sixteen years later, in 1197, an accusation of adultery was brought against Euphrosyne, wife of Alexios III Angelos.[44] The position of

---

40 KINNAMOS, VI, 4 (CSHB, p. 261).

41 CHONIATES, pp. 132, 104 (CSHB, pp. 173, 136); KINNAMOS, V, 8; cf. VII, 3 (CSHB, pp. 226–227, 299); cf. *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades. Historiens Grecs*, Paris 1881, II, pp. 770–771, lines 233–239, where she is clearly a young widow; see A. BRYER, "A Byzantine Family: The Gabrades, c.979 – c.1653," *University of Birmingham Historical Journal* 12, 1970, p. 180.

42 KAZHDAN & CONSTABLE, *People and Power*, p. 72, "In contrast to legal conjugal relations based on considerations of politics, property, or genealogy, these love affairs were regularly imbued with passion and self-sacrifice. Though ephemeral, they were based on sentiment... and the sentiment is emphasized by the boldness with which the lovers broke all the ethical and religious rules."

43 CHONIATES, pp. 224–225, 229–230 (CSHB, pp. 293, 299–300); EUSTATHIOS, 14 (JONES, pp. 18–20; CSHB, pp. 380–381).

44 CHONIATES, pp. 485–489 (CSHB, pp. 641–647).

both women was severely damaged by these charges, though whether they were actually guilty of them is open to dispute: certainly the report of Euphrosyne's adultery seems primarily to have been a political ploy acted on by a husband who wanted her denied access to matters of state, and was recognised as such by the populace. In contrast, the majority of the Constantinopolitans, including the historians Eustathios and Choniates, seem to have been committed to a belief in Marie of Antioch's guilty involvement with the protosebastos. In both cases however sexual misconduct was actually used by their detractors as a point of attack for political reasons, whether the accusation was justified or not. And in fact the truth of the matter was hardly relevant in terms of the intended aims and actual outcome.

The first case where sexual misconduct was used as a vehicle for political attack was against Marie of Antioch. Marie, one of the daughters of Raymond of Poitiers and Constance of Antioch, who had married Manuel in St. Sophia on Christmas Day 1161,[45] appears still to have been seen as an outsider, though during Manuel's reign foreign marriages had become an essential factor in Byzantine diplomacy. In many respects Marie had conformed to the ideal of a perfect empress-consort, having become the mother of a long hoped for heir, Alexios II, Manuel's only legitimate son, in September 1169:[46] in addition she more than matched the standard of beauty thought proper for an empress, which the Byzantines considered an extremely important attribute of the empress and of women generally.[47] Her

---

45 CHONIATES, pp. 115–116 (CSHB, p. 151); KINNAMOS, V, 4 (CSHB, pp. 210–211); WILLIAM of Tyre, XVIII, 31 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), pp. 874–876).

46 CHONIATES, pp. 168–169 (CSHB, pp. 219–220). For a discussion of the date of his birth, see P. WIRTH, "Wann wurde Kaiser Alexios II geboren?" *BZ* 49, 1956, pp. 65–67; JONES, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki*, pp. 169–170. For Manuel's reaction when in 1147 the Patriarch Kosmas cursed the empress Bertha-Eirene's womb so she could not bear a son, see CHONIATES, pp. 81–82 (CSHB, pp. 107–108); for Manuel's grief when Marie of Antioch suffered a miscarriage of a male child prior to the birth of Alexios, see KINNAMOS, VI, 2 (CSHB, pp. 256–257). For the serious accusations which led to the downfall in 1167 of the commander Alexios Axouch, husband of Manuel's niece Maria, including those of sorcery and especially of preventing Marie of Antioch from bearing a son through drugs acquired from a Latin sorcerer, see KINNAMOS, VI, 6 (CSHB, pp. 265–268); cf. CHONIATES, pp. 144–145 (CSHB, pp. 188–189).

47 L. GARLAND, "'The Eye of the Beholder': Byzantine Imperial Women and their Public Image from Zoe Porphyrogenita to Euphrosyne Kamaterissa Doukaina (1028–1203): Part II," *Byzantion* 64(2), 1994, pp. 261–313, esp. 278–281. For Marie's appearance, see CHONIATES, p. 116, cf. 269.

role in politics prior to her husband's death seems to have been minimal: her only political contribution, according to Choniates, was due to her bilingual skills, when she informed Manuel of the double-dealing of an interpreter after an imperial audience with western envoys.[48] But under the circumstances it was only to be expected, even by Eustathios, one of Marie's severest critics, that Manuel should leave her as regent for their son, a position she shared with the patriarch Theodosios Boradiotes. Marie, of course, as the mother of the heir took precedence over the patriarch.[49] Our sources, even the most unfavourable, agree that she was of outstanding appearance: Choniates describes her as being possessed of incomparable beauty:[50] she must, of course, have still been a young woman, even after eighteen years of marriage, as she was presumably in her teens when she married Manuel. Nevertheless, her attractions did not endear her to the Byzantine populace — the reverse in fact was the case. Her charms, and the suitors who were said to be attracted to her, were to lay her open to scandalous rumour and insinuation during her regency. Her position was in fact exacerbated by her extreme physical attractions and the effect that they had on the members of her late husband's court and bureaucracy. Indeed, her beauty was seen as such a threat that, after her assassination by her husband's cousin Andronikos, all public portraits of her were repainted in the form of an elderly and wizened woman, to prevent the passers-by from recalling her fate and pitying her.[51] This, considering the public antipathy to her as regent, highlights the Byzantine appreciation of physical appearance; it also shows how deep-rooted the hostility to her was, and how it was connected in the popular mind with her undoubted attractions.

Marie's unpopularity was also exacerbated during her lifetime by her foreign birth, though this should not be too heavily stressed. Significantly on Manuel's death. when she took the veil, she adopted the name Xene (which as an epithet meant "foreigner"). While Melville Jones has shown that as a monastic name this was in no way unique (Anna Dalassene and

---

332–333 (CSHB, pp. 151, 348–349, 433), who likens her to Aphrodite, Hera and Helen; KINNAMOS, V, 4 (CSHB, p. 210); cf. EUSTATHIOS, 14 (JONES, p. 18; CSHB, p. 380); Constantine MANASSES, "Das Hodoiporikon des Konstantin Manasses," ed. K. HORNA, *BZ* 13, 1904, p. 330.

48 CHONIATES p. 147 (CSHB, p. 191).

49 EUSTATHIOS, 14 (JONES, p. 18; CSHB, pp. 380–381): "ἀλλ' ἡ γυνὴ προεῖχεν, οἷα καὶ γυνὴ καὶ μήτηρ..."; cf. WILLIAM of Tyre XXII, 5 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1070).

50 CHONIATES, p. 116 (CSHB, p. 151).

51 CHONIATES, pp. 332–333 (CSHB, pp. 432–433).

Piroška-Eirene, widow of John II Komnenos, took the same name),[52] still there may have been some deliberate or unconscious reason for this choice by Marie. Historians were undoubtedly aware of the name's significance, and her origins, like her beauty, were even referred to by Choniates in his speech at the wedding of Isaac Angelos and Margaret-Maria of Hungary, while as empress her western descent was referred to in works by court poets.[53] The Byzantines' anti-Latin feelings, which had been growing steadily throughout the reign of Manuel I, whose pro-Latin policies and appointment of Latins as officials led to intense criticism,[54] were to be channelled against Marie as the most obvious representative of the nation in the capital and as a regent with clear pro-Latin sympathies.

Nevertheless, it was Marie's beauty and unattached status that laid her open to personal attacks during her regency, and it was rumoured that she had taken as her "lover" Alexios Komnenos "the protosebastos", a widower of about forty-five years of age, who was said to be planning to depose the young monarch and to marry Marie and seize the throne.[55] His prominence enraged the many other members of the family in positions of official importance whose influence had declined as a result. Marie was accused of having other suitors as well from amongst this group of relations and close

---

52 JONES, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki*, p. 179; ZONARAS, XVIII, 21, cf. 24 (CSHB, III, pp. 731, 746). Piroška was the first foreign-born bride of this period; the daughter of Ladislas of Hungary and Adelheid of Rheinfelden, she married John II Komnenos in 1104, dying in 1134.

53 CHONIATES, *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae*, ed. J.A. van DIETEN, Berlin 1972, p. 40; MANASSES, "Hodoiporikon," pp. 330–331, lines 185–186; Sp. LAMBROS (ed.), "Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κώδιξ 524," *NE* 8, 1911, nos. 98, 100, 109, 221, 335, 336; cf. M.J. JEFFREYS, "The Vernacular εἰσιτήριοι for Agnes of France," in E.M. & M.J. JEFFREYS & A. MOFFATT (edd.), *Byzantine Papers. Proceedings of the First Australian Byzantine Studies Conference*, Canberra 1981, pp. 101–115.

54 CHONIATES, pp. 204–205 (CSHB, pp. 266–268); WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 10 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1079–1080); ANGOLD, *Byzantine Empire*, pp. 203–205; for Manuel's relationship with the Venetians, see also A. STONE, "The Amphibious Serpent: Manuel I and the Venetians," *supra* pp. 251–258.

55 For Alexios, see VARZOS, *Ἡ Γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, no. 132; JONES, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki*, p. 234; his wife had been Maria Doukaina (D.I. POLEMIS, *The Doukai. A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography*, London 1968, no. 223; cf. LAMBROS, "Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κώδιξ 524," nos. 70, 108). For the reaction against the ascendancy of Alexios the protosebastos which changed the existing equilibrium between top-ranking bureaucrats, see MAGDALINO, *Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, pp. 224–225.

associates of the late emperor; these too had political ambitions and even hopes of rising to the throne, her position as regent making her a target for the ambitious and avaricious. These suitors were held up to ridicule: some are said to have conducted their wooing by curling their hair, rubbing themselves with sweet oils like infants and wearing effeminate necklaces, while others concentrated on appropriating public monies (fattening on the revenues like hogs) and trying to set themselves on the throne.[56] The protosebastos himself is mocked by Choniates for spending most of the day sleeping and shutting out the light with carpets and purple curtains.[57] The Latin source William Archbishop of Tyre, who is obviously drawing on Byzantine accounts and who also records that it was rumoured that the protosebastos was carrying on a criminal liaison with the empress, speaks of him as hated by Latins and Greeks alike, and effeminate and given over to the lustful sins of the flesh.[58] The hatred which the other top-ranking bureaucrats felt for Alexios affected their attitude to Marie, who had given him such prominence; still worse they feared that she would marry him and thus perpetuate their loss of status and the related financial perquisites.

Marie's own behaviour is described by Choniates in the following terms: she "pulled in everyone as though on a line by the radiance of her appearance, her pearly countenance, her even disposition, candor, and charm of speech..."[59] This, at least in modern terms, is hardly damaging as a behavioural judgement, though it does imply her to be unsuitable as a regent for a minority reign and as a *de facto* ruler at a time of political instability. The belief in her unsuitability as regent may have been strengthened by the levity of conduct, and devotion to chariot racing and hunting, which was attributed to the young Alexios II for which Marie may have been seen as

---

56 CHONIATES, pp. 224–225, 227–228, 230 (CSHB, pp. 292–293, 297, 300); EUSTATHIOS, 14 (JONES, p. 18; CSHB, p. 381): "καὶ ἦν τοῦ λοιποῦ σκοπὸς αὐτὴ διὰ τὸ προφαίνεσθαι, καί τινες ἔρωτος νόμῳ ἐτοξάζοντο κατ' αὐτῆς λανθάνοντες, εἴ πως μεσιτεύσει τὰ τῆς βολῆς, ὡς ἐῴκει, πρὸς βασιλείας ἐπτυχίαν."

57 CHONIATES, p. 244 (CSHB, p. 317); cf. p. 233 (CSHB, p. 303) where Alexios is described as clinging to the palace apartments like an octopus to a rock.

58 WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 11 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1081): "in uno tamen tam nostris quam omnibus generaliter se penitus exhibebat odiosum, quod, licet Graecorum more mollis esset supra modum, et carnis curam toto studio in immundis perficere satageret desideriis."

59 CHONIATES, p. 244 (CSHB, p. 318; trans. H. J. MAGOULIAS, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates*, Detroit 1984, p. 137).

partly responsible.[60] Eustathios of Thessalonika perceives her as using her charms consciously, implying that her nun's habit did little to conceal her essential attractions: "she was a woman well ripened in love affairs, although she professed to hide them, veiling the sunshine of her charms in a spiritual manner with a cloud of dark garments."[61] So Eustathios envisages her employing her charms deliberately, and thus dangerously and to the empire's detriment, while at the same time implying that her crowds of suitors were the natural result both of her beauty and her prominence. He considers her to have been both experienced in love affairs and in the ability to conceal them, and to have encouraged her crowds of suitors. At the same time he admits that from the time she assumed the regency, she was the mark of the ambitious, while the protosebastos was an object of general jealousy because of his close relationship with the empress. In other words her suitors, both the protosebastos and the rest, were inspired equally by love and ambition.[62]

Choniates highlights the fact that hostility at court towards Marie and her supposed lover was based not only on disapproval of their relationship, but on vexation at Alexios' promotion to power over the heads of other ministers and family members, who feared for their own future wealth and status. To make matters worse the revenues collected by preceding emperors (who had stripped even the poverty-stricken) were said to be channelled to the protosebastos and empress — in Archilochos' phrase "into the belly of the whore" (εἰς ἕντερον πόρνης), a very damning description in view of the fact that Choniates had previously been careful to speak of the liaison between Marie and the protosebastos merely as a report.[63] His worst characteristic,

---

60 CHONIATES, p. 223 (CSHB, p. 292), "... κούφοις δὲ τρεφόμενος πνεύμασι ... καὶ τὸ ἦθος ἐν τοῖς χειρίστοις τυπούμενος."

61 EUSTATHIOS, 14 (trans. JONES, p. 19; CSHB, p. 380), "...ἐρώτων οὔση ὡραίᾳ, εἰ καὶ κρύπτεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἐπηγγείλατο ἐκείνη, τὸν τοῦ κάλλους ἥλιον πνευματικῶς νεφώσασα κατὰ περιβολὴν μέλαιναν". JONES, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki*, p. 170, points out that Eustathios' description of her in his funeral oration for Manuel Komnenos (*Eustathii metropolitae thessalonicensis opuscula*, ed. T.L.F. TAFEL, 1832, 16) presents an interesting contrast to this image: "(Maria) appears like the sun from the east, even though a cloud now covers her, if one may dare to call that black habit a cloud, in which the divine sun of her righteousness shines even more brightly."

62 EUSTATHIOS, 14 (JONES, p. 20; CSHB, p. 381). The more recent description of Marie as "Manuel's young, beautiful, frivolous and spoiled widow" and of Alexios the protosebastos as her "despicable paramour" (D.E. QUELLER, *The Fourth Crusade. The Conquest of Constantinople 1201–1204*, Leicester 1978, p. 26), is hardly justified.

63 CHONIATES, pp. 230, 224: "ὡς ἐλέγετο" (CSHB, pp. 300, 293).

according to William of Tyre, was that he was avaricious and niggardly with the imperial treasure as though he had earned it himself (a trait which might well have made him enemies at court, as did his extreme arrogance and his failure to consult the opinions and wishes of other ministers).[64] It was particularly galling that the empire was being "led astray" by whoever had captured the fancy of the protosebastos and empress,[65] and this was exacerbated in the popular mind at least by the protosebastos' pro-Latin policies: according to William of Tyre he "availed himself of the advice and assistance of the Latins, and as far as possible made them his friends".[66] The protosebastos had total control of affairs, having encouraged the young emperor to sign a decree that every document signed by Alexios II had to be validated by the protosebastos himself in frog-green ink (green ink being an emblem of his rank as protovestiarios).[67]

In February 1181 jealousy of the protosebastos inspired high-ranking members of the aristocracy and bureaucracy, who included members of the royal family, to plot to assassinate him; the leaders were Manuel and John the sons of Andronikos Komnenos, Manuel's illegitimate son Alexios the sebastokrator (whom William, like Eustathios, is apparently mistaken in calling Alexios the protostrator)[68] and John Doukas Kamateros the eparch, together with Marie's stepdaughter Maria and her husband, the young Caesar Renier-John of Montferrat. The marriage of Renier and Maria (Kaisarissa) had taken place in February 1180, when Renier was about seventeen years of

---

64 WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 11 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1081): "avarus tamen erat, et thesauris parcebat imperialibus, tanquam si eos proprio sudore comportasset"; cf. CHONIATES, p. 230 (CSHB, p. 300). See C.M. BRAND, *Byzantium Confronts the West 1180–1204*, Cambridge Mass. 1968, pp. 31–34 for the protosebastos' rapacious government and his unpopularity with the bureaucracy and the lower and middle classes in Constantinople.

65 EUSTATHIOS 21 (JONES, p. 28; CSHB, p. 388): "...τῆς βασιλείας, κουφῶς ἐνταῦθα κἀκεῖ παραγομένης πρὸς τοῦ θέλοντος, εἴπερ μόνον τῷ Πρωτοσεβαστῷ καὶ τῇ ξυνασπιζούσῃ βασιλίδι χαρίζοιτο."

66 WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 11 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), pp. 1080–1081): "name et ipse, imperatoris exemplo, nostrorum consilio utebatur et auxilio, eosque sibi quantum poterat, reddebat familiares" (trans. E.A. BABCOCK & A.C. KREY, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, New York 1943, p. 462) and speaks of the protosebastos' party (ibid. p. 1082) as "our people (partem nostrorum)"; EUSTATHIOS, 28 (JONES, p. 34; CSHB, p. 394).

67 CHONIATES, pp. 229-230 (CSHB, pp. 299–300).

68 WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 5 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1070); see VARZOS, *Ἡ Γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, II, pp. 390–391, 482; JONES, *Eustathios of Thesssaloniki*, pp. 234-235.

age;[69] Maria, daughter of Manuel's first wife Bertha-Eirene of Sulzbach, was a reckless and masculine female of nearly thirty years of age (she was born in March 1152).[70] The conspiracy was revealed by one of the conspirators, and Marie herself presided over the trial at which they were condemned, the four leaders being imprisoned in the Great Palace after various forms of ill-treatment. Others were set free, went into exile or were secretly executed. Plans for the arrest of Maria and Renier were forestalled by their rebellion when they were warned of this eventuality.[71]

Marie in fact had two main enemies opposed to her as regent, the first being her stepdaughter, Maria Kaisarissa who, together with her fiancé Béla-Alexios of Hungary, had been Manuel's heir before the birth of her brother Alexios II.[72] The other was Andronikos, Manuel's cousin, currently in exile, who was to achieve power on a carefully orchestrated wave of anti-Latin — and anti-Marie — sentiment. Both enemies utilised the citizens' belief in the Marie-protosebastos affair, and their detestation of them both. Indeed Andronikos cleverly argued the need for his return to the capital not merely on the threat to the young emperor posed by the protosebastos, but on the fact that widespread ugly gossip about the emperor's mother was in existence throughout the city at all levels ("τὴν ἀπρεπῆ ... φήμην καὶ ὡσὶν ἡμέροις οὐκ εὐπαράδεκτον, ἥτις ἐπ' ἄκρων τειχέων κηρύσσεται καὶ πύλαις δυναστῶν ἐφεδρεύει καὶ πρόεισι παγκόσμιον περιήχημα").[73]

With the revolt of Maria Kaisarissa in April 1181 matters reached a climax. Maria's attempted rebellion was inspired almost equally by disapprobation of her step-mother's misconduct and hatred for the protosebastos (she was said by Choniates to have been infuriated by the

---

69 For Renier and his marriage to Maria in February 1180, see WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII 4 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1067); William himself was present at the festivities. Cf. CHONIATES, pp. 170–171 (CSHB, p. 222); KINNAMOS, III, 11 (CSHB, p. 118); EUSTATHIOS, 14 (JONES, p. 20; CSHB, p. 382).

70 KINNAMOS, III, 11 (CSHB, p. 118); VARZOS, *Ἡ Γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, no. 153; F. CHALANDON, *Les Comnènes II: Jean II Comnène (1118–1143) et Manuel I Comnène (1143–1180*, Paris 1912 (repr. 1960), p. 212. According to CHONIATES, pp. 170–171 (CSHB, p. 222), she was over thirty, as strong as a man, and desperate for marriage.

71 For the conspirators, who also included the general Andronikos Lapardas who went into exile, see EUSTATHIOS 14–15 (JONES, pp. 20–22, cf. 234–236; CSHB, pp. 381–383); CHONIATES, p. 231 (CSHB, p. 301). WILLIAM of Tyre XXII, 5 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1070) dates the discovery of the conspiracy to March 1st 1181.

72 CHONIATES, p. 112, 128, 137 (CSHB, pp. 147, 167, 179).

73 CHONIATES, p. 228 (CSHB, p. 298).

thought of the protosebastos disporting himself in her father's marriage bed: "αὕτη γὰρ ἀποπνιγομένη μικροῦ τῷ τὴν πατρῴαν κοίτην ἀνοσίως ὑπὸ τοῦ πρωτοσεβαστοῦ ἐρευνᾶσθαι... ". She was also jealous of the dowager empress's power as regent for the brother whose birth had denied her the chance of inheriting the throne.[74] Maria had the support and sympathy of the patriarch Theodosios and clergy and most of the populace, but the affair in fact was to result in a popular defeat due to superior numbers on the side of the imperial troops. On the news that they, like the other conspirators who had planned to assassinate the protosebastos, were to be arrested, Maria and her husband fled to St Sophia with a few followers and Renier's Latin bodyguard, where they barricaded themselves in, enlisting Italian and Georgian mercenaries to help secure their control of the church and its immediate neighbourhood. The empress's men attempted to dislodge the rebels with promises of safe conduct, but were unable to hide their hostile intentions, nor did Maria take any notice of the patriarch's criticisms of her fortification of St Sophia.[75] According to Eustathios, on the Friday following Easter (10 April 1181) Theodosios, who supported Maria, was deposed,[76] and this treatment of the patriarch which was actually encouraged by some of the higher clergy led to widespread public comment both at the court and at grass-roots level among the populace and clergy in the city.[77] In the resulting fighting, which Eustathios calls a "sacred war", there were considerable casualties on both sides, the mob taking the opportunity to sack and plunder the dwellings of supporters of the protosebastos.[78]

The "Caesars" were finally cut off from the support of the populace by the imperial troops and driven back into St. Sophia at the beginning of May. To avoid fighting within the church itself an amnesty was arranged after negotiations between the patriarch and the empress Marie, and Maria and

---

74 CHONIATES, pp. 230–231 (CSHB, pp. 300–301).

75 CHONIATES, pp. 232–233 (CSHB, pp. 302–304); EUSTATHIOS, 15–17, 20–21 (JONES, pp. 22–24, 26; CSHB, pp. 383–385, 387–388).

76 EUSTATHIOS, 18 (JONES, p. 24; CSHB, p. 386); CHONIATES (p. 242; CSHB, p. 315) says that the protosebastos proposed the deposition of the patriarch after the amnesty had been declared, but that this was blocked by the kaisarissa; Theodosios was, however, forced to withdraw to the monastery of Christ Pantepoptes.

77 EUSTATHIOS 18–19 (JONES, pp. 24–26; CSHB, p. 386).

78 EUSTATHIOS 20 (JONES, p. 26; CSHB, p. 387); CHONIATES, pp. 235–237, 240 (CSHB, pp. 306–309, 312). Choniates, whose account is more detailed than that of Eustathios, places the culmination of the fighting at the beginning of May. Presumably the skirmishing continued off and on – for several weeks.

Renier returned to the Great Palace.[79] But the result of this conflict between the populace and imperial troops (aided as they were by the Latin inhabitants of the city) was that Marie, who with the protosebastos had been anathematised in the hippodrome by priests supporting her step-daughter's rebellion, became even more unpopular, despite the fact that the government took no retributory steps against the insurgents. Shortly afterwards the patriarch was reinstated with great popular rejoicing and affairs returned to normal (Eustathios implies that up to this point a considerable number of the rebels were still sheltering in St. Sophia).[80] But this episode naturally increased the hatred felt for the empress throughout the whole community, with but a few exceptions.

From this point Marie was the subject of general vilification in the city and her downfall was openly desired.[81] Not surprisingly the arrival of Andronikos Komnenos became generally desired, not so much to take the throne himself but to rescue the emperor from the machinations of the protosebastos and Marie, who was showing herself to be so unsuitable a guardian.[82] In their determination to oppose the protosebastos both the upper classes in the city and Maria Kaisarissa had dispatched letters to Andronikos in exile, prior to Maria's attempted coup, urging him to do something about the situation, a request in tune with the wishes of the citizens generally. Now, in May 1181, he was joined by his daughter Maria, who could give him up-to-the-minute news about the situation in the palace.[83] Accordingly, Andronikos began his approach on Constantinople, and continued to stress the moral issues involved, inciting the people as much as possible against the empress-regent and accusing her of conspiracy against her son. He also criticised Marie and protosebastos both in writing and orally, accusing them of "corrupting the purity of the crown" and of insulting the young emperor ("ὡς ἄρα τὸ τῆς βασιλείας καθάρειον

---

79 CHONIATES, pp. 237–241 (CSHB, pp. 308–313); EUSTATHIOS, 22 (JONES, p. 28; CSHB, p. 389); WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 5 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1070).

80 EUSTATHIOS, 23 (JONES, p. 28; CSHB, p. 390); CHONIATES, pp. 235, 243 (CSHB, pp. 305, 316).

81 EUSTATHIOS 20 (JONES, p. 26; CSHB, p. 387): "ἔγεμον αὐτῆς τὰ πάντων στόματα οὐκ εἰς ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἐβουλεύοντο τὰ εἰς κάκωσιν αὐτῆς καὶ ἀπόστασιν."

82 EUSTATHIOS 21 (JONES, pp. 26–28; CSHB, p. 388); CHONIATES, pp. 243–244 (CSHB, pp. 316–317).

83 CHONIATES, pp. 230–231, 243 (CSHB, pp. 300–301, 316); EUSTATHIOS, 21, 24, cf. 27 (JONES, pp. 26–28, 32; CSHB, pp. 388–390, 393–394).

καπηλεύοντες παροινοῦσι κατὰ τοῦ βασιλέως παιδός").[84] As Andronikos made his way towards Constantinople, an attempt by the protosebastos to force a naval battle, relying heavily on Latins from the city to man the ships, was foiled by the admiral Andronikos Kontostephanos, who was shortly afterwards to defect to Andronikos. An envoy, Xiphilinos, was then sent to Andronikos by the young emperor, to whom Andronikos responded that if they wanted to stop his march on the city they would have to depose the protosebastos from office and bring him to account and confine Marie to a convent for good.[85] As a result the protosebastos was apprehended by the Varangian guard and imprisoned, and several days later was taken across the straits to Andronikos and blinded.[86]

Finally, in his guise as the emperor's "protector", Andronikos harnessed the populace's hatred of both the Latins and the protosebastos' pro-Latin policies by orchestrating a massacre of the Western European inhabitants of the city, primarily Pisans and Genoese, prior to his arrival in the city in April 1182. His pretext for such aggression was that the empress "Xene" and the protosebastos were planning to use the Latins to subdue the populace and were winning their support through gifts and promises of plundering the city, which Eustathios believes to have been no more than the truth. The devastating thoroughness with which Andronikos' Paphlagonian troops, aided by the citizens, carried out their task reveals the hostility felt towards the westerners and Marie as their representative in the capital: some 60,000 are said by Eustathios to have died in the massacre, though the figure is certainly an exaggeration, and 4,000 who survived the slaughter were sold to the Turks as slaves.[87]

---

84 EUSTATHIOS, 24 (JONES, p. 30; CSHB, p. 391); CHONIATES, pp. 243–244 (CSHB, pp. 316–317).

85 CHONIATES, pp. 246–248 (CSHB, pp. 321–322); for Alexios' failure to use his Latin troops against Andronikos to proper advantage, see ibid. p. 250 (CSHB, p. 325); cf. WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 11 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1082).

86 CHONIATES, pp. 248–249 (CSHB, pp. 323–325): he was ill-treated by his guards in not being allowed to sleep; cf. EUSTATHIOS, 31 (JONES, p. 36; CSHB, p. 397); WILLIAM of Tyre XXII, 12 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1082). The Latin mercenaries of the palace guard had already defected to Andronikos: BRAND, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, pp. 41, 325–326.

87 EUSTATHIOS, 24, 28–30 (JONES, pp. 30–36; CSHB, pp. 391, 394–396); CHONIATES, pp. 250–251 (CSHB, pp. 325–326). See also WILLIAM of Tyre XXII, 12–13 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), pp. 1082–1086); D.M. NICOL, *Byzantium and Venice. A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations*, Cambridge 1988, pp. 107–108; BRAND, *Byzantium Confronts the West*,

Andronikos then entered the city himself, his aim being first to consolidate the position of the young emperor and then to achieve the downfall of the empress; at his audience with the emperor and his mother, who had moved from the imperial palace to Philopation, he treated Alexios II with profound and tearful respect, while behaving only with perfunctory courtesy towards Marie.[88] Among his first actions he was said to have had Maria Kaisarissa slowly poisoned by bribing Pterygeonites, one of her eunuch attendants, and Renier too was murdered.[89] After having Alexios II crowned, Andronikos' first priority was to separate him from his mother, whom he constantly accused of not having the state's interests at heart and of actively conspiring against her son.[90] He persuaded the patriarch Theodosios, who was later forced to retire to the island of Terebinthos and replaced by Basil Kamateros,[91] to agree in writing against his will to Marie's expulsion from the palace, and Choniates stresses that had the patriarch not done so he would have been lynched at the hands of outraged elements among the populace incited by Andronikos.[92] Marie, however, was not without some supporters, and three judges of the *velum* were nearly killed by the populace for questioning whether Andronikos' instruction that Marie be prosecuted was in accordance with the young emperor's wishes. Furthermore, Andronikos' actions led to an unsuccessful conspiracy against him which included the very Andronikos Kontostephanos who had earlier defected to to his side, as well as Basil Kamateros the logothete of the drome, and which attracted a large number of adherents.[93] The populace, however, was vehemently opposed to Marie.

After brutally dealing with all opposition, Andronikos then turned his mind to ridding himself of the empress, whom he charged with treason before a court composed of judges hostile to her cause. Marie, who had unwisely attempted to enlist the help of her brother-in-law, Béla of Hungary, by inviting him to invade the Balkan provinces of the empire, was imprisoned in a narrow dungeon near the Golden Gate, where she was

---

esp. pp. 41–42, cf. 204–206; ANGOLD, *Byzantine Empire*, pp. 196, 264–265.

88 CHONIATES, p. 255 (CSHB, p. 331); cf. EUSTATHIOS, 31 (JONES, p. 36; CSHB, pp. 396–397).

89 CHONIATES, pp. 259–260 (CSHB, pp. 336–337).

90 CHONIATES, p. 265 (CSHB, pp. 343–344).

91 CHONIATES, pp. 261–262, cf. 252-254 (CSHB, pp. 338–339, 328–330); EUSTATHIOS, 33–35 (JONES, pp. 38–40; CSHB, pp. 399–400). Basil Kamateros became patriarch in August 1183.

92 CHONIATES, pp. 265 (CSHB, p. 344).

93 CHONIATES, pp. 265–267 (CSHB, pp. 344–346).

subjected to ill-treatment and mockery from her guards. Her execution was postponed because of the refusal of Andronikos' son Manuel and brother-in-law to carry out her execution, but shortly afterwards she was strangled, with her son's consent, under the supervision of Constantine Tripsychos and the eunuch Pterygeonites, and buried on the sea-shore.[94] Alexios II was then dealt with: Choniates tells us that, after being strangled with a bowstring, his corpse was brought to Andronikos, who kicked it and mocked the emperor's parents, Manuel as a liar and Marie as a well-known prostitute. The headless body of the emperor was finally thrown into the sea encased in lead.[95]

So what was the reaction to Marie's death? It is interesting that our historians who so criticised Marie, her policies, and her behaviour, consider her murder unnecessary and an abomination. Eustathios condemns Andronikos for his assassination of the empress, and states that those who actually committed the crime were justly punished later for their actions, when Andronikos deprived them of their reward.[96] Therefore, despite his disapproval of the empress's supposed affair with the protosebastos and her pro-Latin policies, Eustathios is still able to feel sympathy for her plight: in other words he views the murder of the empress as an outrage, whatever her previous behaviour in the privacy of the palace. Choniates goes even further: his brief epitaph for Marie recalls her outstanding appearance as "mankind's sweet light and vision of beauty for mankind (τὸ γλυκερὸν φάος καὶ καλὸν ὅραμα ἀνθρώποις)",[97] and he laments both her burial in obscurity on the seashore and Andronikos' bloodthirsty exultation at her fate.[98]

The machinations of Andronikos and of Maria Kaisarissa, Marie's step-daughter, had been able to whip up public feeling to such an extent that the populace rose in open rebellion. This led to Andronikos' take-over of power and the murder of Marie, her "lover", her step-daughter and step-daughter's

---

94 CHONIATES, pp. 267–269 (CSHB, pp. 346–349); cf. EUSTATHIOS, 35 (JONES, p. 40; CSHB, pp. 400–401), who says her body was thrown into the sea; according to WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 13 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), p. 1086) Andronikos at first treated Marie with kindness: "sororem quoque et sororis maritum, simul et matrem imperatoris, intra septa palatii, adhuc tractans humanius."

95 CHONIATES, p. 274 (CSHB, pp. 354–355).

96 EUSTATHIOS, 35 (JONES, p. 40; CSHB, pp. 400–401).

97 Telemachos is addressed as "γλυκερὸν φάος" by Penelope and Eumaios (HOM. *Od.* 16, 23; 17, 41).

98 CHONIATES, p. 269 (CSHB, p. 349); cf. idem, *Orationes et Epistulae*, p. 40.

husband, and her son the emperor. In this case, suspicions of Marie's supposed affair with the protosebastos certainly played a significant part in her deposition and murder, fuelled by the political ambition and jealousy of those she favoured which contributed considerably to the outcome. Even though a suitable pretext for a *coup d' état* might well have been found by Andronikos under any conditions, the rumours of this relationship between Marie and the protosebastos proved to contribute seriously to Marie's undoing and offered a chance for Andronikos to be invited to intervene: to the great disadvantage of the imperial family, the Latin inhabitants of the city, and the empire as a whole,[99] and was to lead, shortly, to the end of the Komnenian dynasty.

Byzantine attitudes towards open sexual immorality were strict, and as one of the hated "Latins" Marie was obviously viewed with especial outrage. It is also conceivable that the public reaction to Marie's relationship with the protosebastos might have been affected by knowledge of her sister Philippa's earlier affair with Andronikos Komnenos and her brother Bohemond III's divorce from one of Manuel's nieces to marry a "witch" called Sibylla. Both incidents must have been generally known throughout the court and presumably in the city. Andronikos, who been sent by Manuel to govern Cilicia, had had a brief passionate intrigue with Philippa of Antioch in 1166, when he deserted to Antioch on hearing reports of Philippa's attractions. Once in Antioch, unconcerned about any other commitments, he gave himself up to the pleasures of dress, foppery and seducing Philippa. The couple were even engaged to be married according to Kinnamos, but Andronikos had to leave in haste early in 1167, taking with him a large proportion of the revenue levied for the emperor's taxes. Philippa, to the disgust of her brother-in-law Manuel, was utterly infatuated with the handsome and dandified Andronikos, who totally bewitched her with his physical attractions, exotic clothes and demonstrations of affection and scorned the match her brother-in-law Manuel tried hurriedly to arrange for her with the sebastos Constantine Kalamanos, whom she laughed at for being short and of obscure parentage and of no account beside the heroic and world famous Andronikos.[100] The affair, however, did not last for long, and Andronikos abandoned Philippa after several months and left for Jerusalem where he became besotted with his cousin, Theodora, widow of Baldwin

---

99 For Béla's victories in the Balkans, leading to the collapse of Byzantine power in the region, see BRAND, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, p. 47.

100 CHONIATES, pp. 139–141 (CSHB, pp. 181–184); KINNAMOS, VI. 1 (CSHB, p. 250). According to WILLIAM of Tyre, XXI, 13 (R.H.C.Occ., I(2), pp. 1026–1027) Andronikos actually married Philippa.

III.[101] Philippa, despite this episode, was later to be married briefly to Humphrey of Toron, both of them dying shortly afterwards.[102] It was only to be expected that, because of Philippa's relationship to their empress and Manuel and Andronikos' involvement in the affair, the Constantinopolitans would have been informed of this episode.

Furthermore, Marie's brother, Bohemond III, prince of Antioch, may also have been known to the Byzantines for his bigamous marriage to a certain Sibylla, who was said to be a sorceress. Bohemond had been married to Theodora, another niece of Manuel's (perhaps the daughter of John the protovestiarios, and thus Manuel's great-niece),[103] whom he left for his mistress at about the time of Manuel's death in 1180. Because of his refusal to abandon this wicked course, he was excommunicated by Patriarch Aimery of Antioch, as a result of which he physically attacked the patriarch and other members of the clergy and confiscated church treasure and estates. Despite pressure from both Eraclius the patriarch of Jerusalem and his nobles, and one should presumably also assume from the Byzantine court, Bohemond persisted in this brazen affair, to such an extent that he exiled the best of his erstwhile supporters for disapproving of his adulterous conduct.[104] It can be conjectured, therefore, that Marie's sister and brother were already known to the Byzantines in the context of amorous liaisons, and their conduct might well have coloured their attitude towards Marie and her relationship with the protosebastos and provided further evidence for the untrustworthiness of Latins in personal relationships.

Marie was in fact perceived as unsuited to her power and position. In essence she was the wrong woman, in the wrong place, at the wrong time: a young beauty, in a position of real power, at a time of political and economic instability. Rumours of this liaison with her chief minister proved to contribute seriously to her undoing and won her the hostility of

---

101 KINNAMOS, VI, 1 (CSHB, pp. 250–251); CHONIATES, pp. 141–142 (CSHB, pp. 184–185). For a Latin view of Andronikos' "abduction" of Theodora, see WILLIAM of Tyre, XX, 2, XXI, 13 (R.H.C.Occ. I(2), pp. 943, 1026–1027). For William's attitude towards the Byzantines and their civilisation in general, see P.W. EDBURY & J.G. ROWE, *William of Tyre: Historian of the Latin East*, Cambridge 1988, pp. 130–150.

102 WILLIAM of Tyre, XXI, 13 (R.H.C.Occ., I(2), pp. 1026–1027). For Philippa's appearance, see CHONIATES, p. 139 (CSHB, p. 181).

103 BRAND, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, p. 22.

104 WILLIAM of Tyre, XXII, 5–7 (R.H.C. Occ. I(2), pp. 1069, 1071–1074); EDBURY & ROWE, *William of Tyre*, pp. 106–107, accept that Sibylla was a "practitioner of the black arts". For Manuel's marriage policy, see MAGDALINO, *Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, pp. 209–217.

the Constantinopolitans. But the problem could also be said to have been a dynastic one, rather than behavioural, as she was in a position, like Eudokia Makrembolitissa earlier, which might have threatened the status of her young son, as well as entrenched interests within the bureaucracy. In some ways, therefore, her actual misconduct was less relevant than the possibility of her remarrying, the rise of another member of the Komnenoi to the throne, and the consequent damage to the establishment, the influence of her other ministers, and the rights of her son Alexios II.

A decade later than Marie, the empress Euphrosyne, wife of Alexios III Angelos, was charged with adultery by members of her own family. The situation faced by Euphrosyne was very different from that which confronted Marie: Euphrosyne was married to a weak and indecisive emperor, whom she had supported in his seizure of his brother's throne, and her position as empress was unassailable and her control of government secure. She was of good family, being the granddaughter of Eirene Doukaina (who was probably the niece of the empress Eirene Doukaina and thus cousin of Anna Komnene) and the logothete Gregory Kamateros. Their son Andronikos Doukas Kamateros, Euphrosyne's father, had been both eparch (chief official of the city of Constantinople who enforced law and order) and megas droungarios (the judge who headed the court of the *velum*), and played an important role in Manuel's ecclesiastical policy. In 1161 he had actually been one of the embassy sent to escort Marie of Antioch to Constantinople.[105] His brother John Kamateros, Euphrosyne's uncle, had been logothete of the drome and a close companion of Manuel I and was noted for his strong head at imperial drinking-parties.[106] Euphrosyne's

---

105 KINNAMOS, V, 4 (CSHB, p. 210); POLEMIS, *Doukai*, no. 98; MAGDALINO, *Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, pp. 259–260, 350, 507–508.

106 CHONIATES, pp. 112–115 (CSHB, pp. 147–150), who describes his alcoholic capacity, and his passion for green beans, in some detail; MAGDALINO, *Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, pp. 255, 259 (the logothete of the drome (the "post") was responsible for dealing with foreigners in Constantinople and releasing official information: ibid. p. 229). POLEMIS, *Doukai*, no. 99 appears to be a conflation of several figures including this one. Choniates' comment (p. 115) that John was courageous and worthy of his maternal ancestry suggests him to be another son of Gregory and Eirene Doukaina (POLEMIS, no. 32) rather than Andronikos' son. He may possibly have been the John Doukas who was a relative of Manuel (perhaps through marriage, through the reference may be to their comon descent from the empress Eirene: they were second cousins) and served with him in the Serbian campaign of c. 1150 (KINNAMOS, III, 9; CSHB, p. 109).

brother John also served as eparch and was one of the conspirators imprisoned for opposing Alexios the protosebastos in 1181; after Andronikos' assassination he may have been made logothete of the drome by Isaac II.[107] A second brother, Basil Kamateros Doukas, who was logothete of the drome under Manuel, was blinded and sent to Russia for rebelling against Andronikos Komnenos prior to Marie's assassination, but returned to have a profitable career under Alexios III.[108] Two of the Kamateroi were patriarch under the Angeloi brothers: Basil II between 1183 and 1186 and John X from 1198 to 1206,[109] while John Kamateros, the *epi tou kanikleiou* (keeper of the inkstand), who helped dispose of the corpse of Alexios II for Andronikos Komnenos, became archbishop of Bulgaria.[110] Clearly Euphrosyne's family deserves the title of "the most powerful bureaucratic dynasty of the late twelfth century",[111] a position to which she herself certainly contributed.

As befitted her family background, Euphrosyne was one of the masterful Byzantine-born imperial women of the period, ranking with Anna Dalassene, Eirene Doukaina and Eudokia Makrembolitissa. The date of her marriage is not known, but at the time of her husband's accession she was certainly well into middle age: all her three daughters were married, and she was to die c. 1211.[112] Her strong-mindedness and love of power were incontestable, and Choniates uses her to show up by contrast her husband's weakness and vacillation, describing her as "a monstrous evil", domineering, arrogant, intriguing, inquisitive, rapacious, immodest, shameless, extravagant, and in

---

107 CHONIATES, p. 231 (CSHB, p. 301); EUSTATHIOS, 14–15 (JONES, pp. 20, 22; CSHB, pp. 382–383); POLEMIS, *Doukai*, no. 99.

108 CHONIATES, pp. 266–267, 485 (CSHB, pp. 345–346, 641); POLEMIS, *Doukai*, no. 100.

109 CHONIATES, pp. 262, 514 (CSHB, pp. 339, 681).

110 CHONIATES, pp. 274 (CSHB, p. 355).

111 MAGDALINO, *Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, p. 255, who notes (pp. 255–256) that the Kamateroi are generally treated by Choniates with disapproval (instances are the lackeys of Andronikos, Basil Kamateros who inveigled his way into the patriarchate and John the *epi tou kanikleiou* (CHONIATES, pp. 262, 276, 274; CSHB, pp. 339, 357, 355), as well as Euphrosyne). However, the portrait of Euphrosyne, when faced with charges of adultery (pp. 484–489; CSHB, pp. 639–647), is actually sympathetic: Choniates reserves his hostility for her relatives at this point.

112 For Euphrosyne and her daughters Eirene, Anna and Eudokia, see POLEMIS, no. 101, p. 131.

many respects given to overshadowing the emperor himself.[113] He portrays her as manly in spirit ("τὸ μὲν φρόνημα καὶ λίαν ἀνδρώδης"), and as an eloquent and persuasive speaker who squandered the empire's substance in luxury and was able to prevail over her husband — most improperly for a woman — to alter established conventions and institute new ones. Indeed, by dishonouring the "veil of modesty", she was the subject of open censure and a reproach to her husband ("...τὸ κάλυμμα τῆς αἰδοῦς ἀτιμάσασα ἐκλώζετο καὶ διεσυρίττετο καὶ εἰς ὄνειδος ἦν τῷ ταύτην ἁρμοσαμένῳ"), who was, however, fully aware of all her improprieties, though he pretended not to be. The extent of her power and arrogance was seen not only in the majesty of her appearance and in the fact that reverence was sometimes paid to her at a separate court to that of the emperor, but in her issuing orders with equal authority to that of Alexios and altering his decrees as and when she wished:[114] indeed she was clearly seen as equal or greater in authority to the emperor himself, while affairs of state became the sport of the women's apartments and the emperor's close relatives, with Alexios himself, who might just as well have been at the ends of the earth ("ultima Thule"), having no idea at all of what was happening in the empire.[115]

Euphrosyne certainly played a critical role in Alexios' seizure of power during his coup against his brother Isaac II in 1195, when she prepared for his entry into the city and was responsible for dispersing a mob supporting a rival candidate Alexios Kontostephanos, taking over the Great Palace at great risk to herself. Even before the fate of Isaac was known or Alexios had arrived everyone deserted to Euphrosyne and prostrated themselves before her. She took full advantage of the situation to ensure that the transfer of power passed without bloodshed, controlling events until Alexios arrived several days later: indeed, one suspects that the whole bid for government was her idea.[116] This conduct foreshadows her later dominance over imperial politics. She displayed her masculine qualities against popular insurrectionists in the capital in 1200, in particular neutralising the plots of a certain Kontostephanos (possibly her earlier opponent) during Alexios' absence to deal with the revolt of Ivanko. She had also been instrumental in Alexios' attempt to recall Isaac Komnenos, previously tyrant of Cyprus and Euphrosyne's relative, from the court of Kaykhusraw to Constantinople.

---

113 CHONIATES, pp. 456–457, 460–461, 484 (CSHB, pp. 601–602, 606–607, 639–640).
114 CHONIATES, pp. 460–461 (CSHB, pp. 606–607).
115 CHONIATES, p. 484 (CSHB, pp. 639–640).
116 CHONIATES, pp. 455–457 (CSHB, pp. 600–602).

Isaac had designs on the throne, but was unable to persuade Kaykhusraw to assist him in his plans for an attack on the empire.[117]

Choniates' public speeches portray her as an entirely fitting helpmate and partner for Alexios, and praise her political wisdom and decisiveness, her actions against rebels, and her guardianship of the empire in Alexios' absence:[118] these qualities, therefore, were openly accepted and part of her public image. Her firm grasp of power was illustrated by her discussions with her intimates during Alexios' severe illness in 1199 as to possible successors, in which her main concern was the choice of a candidate well-disposed towards herself; Choniates considers the discussions to have been empowered totally by self-interest, with no consideration at all given to the needs of the empire. That she was a considerable threat to any opposing regime was clearly shown when Alexios fled the capital in July 1203, one of the first actions of the new government being to seize and imprison Euphrosyne and her close relatives. The new emperor, the reinstated Isaac II, also appropriated their funds, which Choniates implies were immense, to use to conciliate the crusaders who were pressing heavily for payment.[119]

The part played by Euphrosyne in domestic administration was clearly considerable, and its very effectiveness was to lead to her temporary downfall. It was she who arranged for the reinstatement of Constantine Mesopotamites as chief minister (Mesopotamites had previously served under Isaac II), a move which enraged her own relatives who were thus removed from power and, still worse, prevented from reaping its financial perquisites. In fact, it was her own son-in-law, her daughter Eirene's husband Andronikos Kontostephanos, and her own brother Basil Kamateros Doukas, who in revenge for this appointment of Mesopotamites and because they felt themselves disadvantaged by her total control of affairs, laid a charge of adultery against her in October 1197. They suggested to the emperor Alexios that, as a result, she should be removed from power and her great wealth confiscated. This accusation also included warning of a potential threat to Alexios' throne from Euphrosyne and her supposed "lover", whom they identified as Vatatzes, a young man who had been adopted by Alexios. As a result, the emperor had Vatatzes executed, but set

---

117 CHONIATES, pp. 519, 463–464 (CSHB, pp. 687, 611); POLEMIS, *Doukai*, no. 103.

118 CHONIATES, *Orationes et Epistulae*, pp. 67–68, 105; see also GARLAND, "Eye of the Beholder," pp. 292–293.

119 CHONIATES, pp. 497–498, 549–550, 551 (CSHB, pp. 659–660, 727, 729).

out for Thrace without taking further action against Euphrosyne.[120] However, on Alexios' return two months later, Euphrosyne perceived that the threat against her which these accusations posed was a very real one. Subdued for once by the fear not only of disgrace but even of possibly losing her life over this issue, she was actually afraid of her husband and publicly proclaimed her innocence, appealing to any who might help her to speak in her defence.[121] She was generally believed and pitied. Alexios, however, ignored her plea for a fair and open trial, even though one party assured him that the empress's accusers were not to be believed, while a further group warned the emperor that if he put her away for adultery he could hardly recall her later without great loss of face. Instead of fairly assessing the truth of the circumstances, he tortured some of the women of the bedchamber and a few days later ordered that Euphrosyne be removed from the palace. As a result, divested of her imperial robes and in a common workwoman's frock ("παντὸς ἐστερημένην ἀρχικοῦ στολίσματος καὶ λαμπροῦ περιβλήματος"), she was secretly led from the palace and sent in a small fishing boat to Nematarea, a convent near the mouth of the Pontos, escorted by two handmaids, who spoke only broken Greek. The emperor's reaction surprised even her accusers, who had not intended to expel her completely from power, and they were taunted by the populace over their actions.[122]

This treatment of a wife charged with adultery can be compared to the very similar punishment experienced by Euphrosyne's youngest daughter, Eudokia, at the hands of her first husband, Stephen I Nemanja of Serbia (Eudokia was to marry twice more, and to be temporarily an empress as wife of Alexios V Mourtzouphlos). This took place only a year after Euphrosyne's banishment, late in 1198. Their marriage had irretrievably broken down after some ten years and Eudokia accused Stephen of being drunk from morning to night and of continually indulging in clandestine affairs. Stephen therefore put about the story that he had caught her in adultery (Choniates leaves open the possibility that he may have been telling the truth) and turned her out in an attenuated and hardly decent shift to find her own way back to her family. In the event, Stephen's brother Vukan escorted Eudokia to Dyrrachium, where she was met by envoys from her

---

120 CHONIATES, pp. 484–486 (CSHB, pp. 639–643).

121 CHONIATES, p. 487 (CSHB, p. 644): "δεδοικυῖα τὸν σύλλεκτρον τὰς χεῖρας πρὸς ἅπαντες ὤρεγεν ἐλεεινῷ καὶ ἀπεσβεσμένῳ βλέμματι καὶ ἠντιβόλει τοὺς παρὰ βασιλεῖ πεποίθησιν ἔχοντας, προστῆναι τε αὐτῆς ... ".

122 CHONIATES, pp. 487–489 (CSHB, pp. 645–647).

father who brought her a throne and necklaces and clothes befitting her imperial status.[123]

Euphrosyne's exile lasted for six months, at which point her relatives decided that they might well have made a mistake in so shaming their family and recommended her return. In this they were bowing to public pressure in her favour which was expressed by the reproaches of the populace against them for their part in orchestrating her banishment. Recalled by her husband, she returned to greater power than ever, cleverly concealing her anger at events, and insinuated herself back into her husband's good graces. Thus she skilfully and diplomatically turned the episode to advantage and regained her influence over the imperial administration.[124] What is interesting is that no one seems to have considered Euphrosyne actually guilty of adultery for a moment. Clearly, however, the merest suspicion of misconduct was sufficient excuse for summary banishment, and made a suitable pretext for Alexios to remove her from the palace. Her piteous and subdued expression when accused falsely of adultery shows her in a most unusual light — even the generally masterful and domineering Euphrosyne changed her tune when faced with charges which struck so dangerously at her position.

That Euphrosyne *was* innocent of this charge of adultery is shown by the surprise of her accusers at her being exiled — the punishment far exceeded their expectations, since they had intended to do no more than neutralise her power and influence. They had unfortunately underestimated the emperor's decisiveness on this occasion and Alexios' apparent acceptance of the truth of their accusations laid Euphrosyne's relatives who had caused this banishment open to popular ridicule, without apparently restoring their fortunes. If the empress's relatives had believed that the generally soft-hearted Alexios would act on their accusations, they would surely not have anticipated any form of leniency on his part. In the event, Choniates implies that the real disgrace belonged not only to Euphrosyne's relatives, but to the emperor, whose recall of the empress, at the instigation of the very people who had urged her removal in the first place, labelled him publicly as weak and indecisive. Euphrosyne's influence was certainly not affected by the episode though her behaviour now became even more extreme. Public comment was aroused by her involvement in sorcery and divination, as well as by her devotion to

---

123 CHONIATES, pp. 531–532 (CSHB, pp. 703-705).

124 CHONIATES, pp. 488–489 (CSHB, pp. 646–647). Note that Mesopotamites had remained in office during the empress's exile, but his ambition caused his downfall shortly afterwards (ibid. pp. 489–492; CSHB, pp. 648–652).

falconry. In her efforts to look into the future to foretell and disperse impending crises she indulged in divinatory rituals, mutilating the statues in the hippodrome for magical purposes. Her activities included cutting off the snout of the Kalydonian boar and removing the heads and limbs from other statuary. However, this gave rise to popular taunts, and the populace, who had obviously not forgotten the adultery incident and the cause of her exile, mocked what they considered to be her extreme improprieties by training talking birds to make fun of her in public by repeating "πολιτικὴ τὸ δίκαιον" ("whore, set a fair price"), presumably in reference to her banishment two years earlier. Thus she was ridiculed in the streets of the capital not for her influence on government or her sorcery, but for the sexual irregularities of which she had earlier been accused.[125]

Euphrosyne was a non-conformist in behaviour — she was too masterful, too unfeminine,[126] and totally uncommitted to the behaviour appropriate for an empress-consort. Nevertheless, accusations against her by high-flying bureaucrats at court concerned not her actual political activities and dominance in the imperial administation, but took the form of attacks on her chastity, linked with the warning that her lover had designs on the throne. This was the one charge, based as it was on vulnerability of women to attacks on female sexuality within a patriarchal society, which frightened even the masterful Euphrosyne. She, like Marie, fell victim to enemies who used in their attacks on these imperial ladies the forces of conventional morality. In such an ideology of male dominance, not only the rumour of misbehaviour, but even the suggestion of an attempt at remarriage by a dowager empress, could provoke criticism, however untrue the accusation might have been. But opposition to a second marriage in the case of Marie of Antioch was not just a result of her status as regent for a minor, in which case remarriage could have been seen as having serious dynastic implications by constituting a threat to the young emperor's future power: the main danger was to vested interests in the administration, who feared the

---

125 CHONIATES, pp. 519–520 (CSHB, pp. 687–688). The *Life of St. Euthymios* also tells us of interference with the statues in the hippodrome: the Emperor Alexander (912–13), suffering from impotence, "addressed himself to sorcerers, being led by them to lawless deeds, putting clothes upon the bronze figures of the zodiac in the hippodrome, incensing them, and having them illuminated with candelabra" (P. KARLIN-HAYTER, "Vita S. Euthymii," *Byzantion* 25, 1955, pp. 136–137).

126 CHONIATES, p. 460, "τὸ μὲν φρόνημα καὶ λίαν ἀνδρώδης"; cf. his description of Maria Kaisarissa (p. 171). For his conventional view of women's intelligence (on the quick-wittedness of Eudokia, mistress of Andronikos Komnenos), see p. 105 (CSHB, pp. 606, 222, 137).

consequence of the empress's marriage — the elevation of one of their own number to the throne.

Of the empresses themselves whose names were linked with that of a lover, Marie of Antioch *may* have been unjustly accused, and Euphrosyne certainly was. But in both cases, the accusations stemmed from political motives, and suspicion of adulterous or immoral conduct was used to their disadvantage by the populace or by forces closer at home. In such situations the reality current within the society was less important than generally held beliefs about appropriate gender roles: and stereotyped gender-based assumptions about female sexuality here determined a conditioned response. Marie, of course, was vulnerable because she was a foreigner, even after nearly twenty years as a blameless empress-consort: but she was unpopular primarily not because she was a westerner but because she was a beautiful and dangerously unattached female, who could divert the throne to a husband of her choosing; Euphrosyne's enemies hinted the same possibility to Alexios.

Eustathios specifically says that Marie's lovers kindled an evil which affected the entire world ("οἱ δὴ ἔρωτες ἐκεῖνοι πυρσεύσαντες ... ἀνῆψαν κακὸν κοσμικὸν"),[127] and his account of what he considers to be "the present calamities" begins with the death of Manuel Komnenos and Marie's disastrous regency. The question is: would Marie have been removed from power if the public had not perceived her as having an affair with the protosebastos? Would her origins and pro-Latin policies have been enough to draw criticism and encourage rebellion? The answer is, presumably not: her step-daughter Maria Kaisarissa was half-German, married to a westerner, and used western troops in her attempted coup, and yet had the support of the populace; furthermore the Latin mercenaries of the palace guard defected from Marie and the protosebastos to Andronikos. Marie's origins merely exacerbated the hostility towards her, they did not cause it. It was the sexual dimension in Marie's public persona that brought about the popular support for Andronikos and resulted in Marie's own death and the end of the Komnenian house. She may have not been well-liked by the Constantinopolitans at the grass-roots level because of her crusader background, but as far as the bureaucracy was concerned she was not unpopular because she was accused of sexual misconduct: rather she was accused of sexual misconduct because her regime was unpopular. And yet

---

127 EUSTATHIOS, 13 (JONES, p. 18; CSHB, p. 380), translated by ANGOLD, *Byzantine Empire*, p. 263, "Burning love, almost consciously, loosed evil upon the world", who notes that Eustathios casts Marie in the role of a new Helen.

had she not been empress-regent, her sexual preferences would hardly have mattered to anyone, except as a possible occasion for scurrilous comment. The same was the case for Euphrosyne: the charges brought against her, which resulted in her exile, were certainly a direct consequence of her overriding interference in politics, and she was removed because she was a threat to established interests at court. In both cases it was the shift in the balance of bureaucratic power that led to these charges.

There are a number of conclusions to be drawn from this discussion: but the moral can be kept fairly simple. Probably the most important lesson is that as an imperial female in Byzantium at this period it was quite acceptable to be a non-conformist and appear to defy conventional morality if you were popular or relatively unimportant. But it was not such a good idea if you had enemies and were in a position of influence and power. And these enemies would use the first and most obvious gender-based weapon in their armoury: the accusation of sexual misconduct, justified or otherwise. Furthermore, "popular" points-of-attack would naturally focus on this perceived immorality as a vehicle for abuse and criticism. Freedom of action did not always lead to such consequences: Zoe Porphyrogenita, for example, was arguably in a unique position as the populace were well aware; as empress in her own right, and one moreover totally disinterested in politics, she was not a political risk to the administration. But even when an empress was perceived as openly wielding power, either through a favourite minister or on her own account, challenging male rule not only by seeking to enter what was considered the distinctly male sphere but by operating successfully within it, this in itself was not sufficient grounds for overt criticism: such behaviour was not "non-conformist" enough to draw fire, and the attack against her had to be on the basis of moral conduct and biological difference.

Kekaumenos in the eleventh century suggested that daughters should be locked up for the protection both of themselves and the family's honour, believing inchastity on the part of a daughter to be sharper than a serpent's tooth.[128] This was doubtless an extreme view. But while imperial women in the twelfth century could possess a fair degree of liberty[129] — in spite of

---

128 KEKAUMENOS, *Cecaumeni Strategicon et incerti scriptoris de officiis regiis libellus*, ed. B. WASSILIEWSKY & V. JERNSTEDT, St. Petersburg 1896, repr. Amsterdam 1965, p. 51, "τὰς θυγατέρας σου ὡς καταδίκους ἔχε ἐγκεκλεισμένας καὶ ἀπροόπτους, ἵνα μὴ ὡς ὑπὸ ἀσπίδος δηχθῇ".

129 See Garland, "Life and Ideology," pp. 386–391; eadem, "Conformity and Licence at the Byzantine Court" (forthcoming). For the ceremonial role of

their limited mobility — these two cases show that the forces of conventional morality could be a very dangerous weapon against any "Caesar's wife" when she threatened the interests of the bureaucracy.

---

the empress, see A. MOFFATT, "Variations in Byzantine Imperial Ceremonial: the *De Ceremoniis* of Constantine Porphyrogennetos," *supra* pp. 224–225.

BYZANTIUM AND ITS FUTURE: 1

MAKING DATA CONFORM: COMPUTERISING THE EVERGETIS PROJECT[1]

Dion Smythe / King's College, London

Nennius introduces his *Historia Britonum* with a panoply of modesty-*topoi* to gladden every Byzantinist's heart.[2] Nennius claims comprehensive preservation of the past from the stream of time in the face of a lack of scholarly rigour,[3] but is treated less charitably by historians infuriated by the lack of chronological precision or order in the chronicle.[4] Making data conform to preconceived theses or worldviews is not a problem of the computer age: it has always been with us. The theoretical abstractions and methodologies of the natural sciences are frequently anathematised by historians who pride themselves on their humanist tradition and orientation to "real people" in the "real world", whether truffle-hunter or parachutist.[5] Historians present the methods of history in a simpler way: one merely reads the sources and then writes. I have no desire to expose myself to the slings and arrows of full-blown historical dialogue by attempting to square the circle, but the presence of debates such as that between E.H. Carr and G.R. Elton signifies an awareness of the complexities of the relationship between historians and their sources, and ultimately their evidence.[6] What historians do is to take a heap of things they have found and impose a coherence, an

---

1 I thank the British Academy, who by a grant from the Overseas Conference Fund enabled me to attend the conference "Religion in the Ancient World" at The University of New England in Armidale, NSW, Australia, (July, 1993), where I gave a version of this paper.

2 J.A. GILES, (ed.), *Six Old English Chronicles*, London 1848, pp. 384–385.

3 "Some extracts which the dulness of the British nation had cast away ... But I have got together all that I could find" (GILES, *Six Chronicles*, pp. 384–385); also "But I have brought together the histories that I found" (J.H. TODD, (ed.), *The Irish Version of the Historia Britonum by Nennius*, Dublin 1935, p. 27); cf. H. MARCH, *Dark Age Britain*, Newton Abbot 1970, p. 66.

4 "He says with truth, 'I have made a heap of all I found'" (J. MORRIS, *The Age of Arthur*, London 1973, p. 37).

5 J.F. HALDON, "'Jargon 'vs. 'the facts'? Byzantine History-Writing and Contemporary Debates," *BMGS* 9, 1984–85, pp. 95–132. Perhaps the two beasts are more familiarly to Byzantinists as caterpillar or butterfly: I. ŠEVČENKO, "Two Varieties of Historical Writing," *Ideology, Letters and Culture in the Byzantine World* , Aldershot 1982, essay 1, p. 352.

6 E.H. CARR, *What is History*, Harmondsworth 1964; G.R. ELTON, *The Practice of History*, Glasgow 1969.

analysis. The narrative of "how it really was" is what makes history entertaining; the analysis of why the diachronic changes happened when they did makes history valuable. Both involve acting upon the raw materials of history, and making them "conform" to certain expectations, whether to the canons of certain literary genres — the masterwork written for tenure — or to support a thesis of historical explanation.

Using computers in history does not render the historian surplus to requirements. If the computer is used merely to replace mechanical data storage methods — from parchment with the infinite number of monks to filecards with the infinite number of research assistants — with electronic ones, the net result will merely be an increase in the timescale of the project.[7] However, as computer scientists turn their thoughts to the fifth-generation computers capable of parallel processing and possessing "artificial intelligence", it is right to ask what computers can do for us as historians. To do this however we must concentrate on what we wish to achieve as historians, not what current restrictions of computer configurations will allow us to do.[8] Computers must be asked to do new things, to ask new questions, to understand new areas of the past, not merely computerise the ways of working which have and indeed do serve us well.[9] Seeking to encourage Byzantinists to do new things may be viewed as a bad thing,[10] but the real danger lies not in their novelty, but in the failure to plan the computerisation thinking as historians. Whilst it may be better to travel hopefully rather than to arrive, it is not advisable to leave Clio to wander like Alice in computer wonderland, in the hope that something will turn up. Richard Ennals expresses this need for clear identification and description of the problem to be solved in memorable fashion: "If you are baffled by a problem do not turn to a computer: 'To err is human; to really foul things up use a computer'."[11] The first stage must be to define the problem in

---

7 A. GILMOUR-BRYSON, "Computers and Medieval Historical Texts: an Overview," in P. DENLEY & D. HOPKIN (edd.), *History and Computing*, Manchester 1987, p. 3.

8 M. THALLER, "The Need for a Theory of Historical Computing," in P. DENLEY, S. FOGELVIK and C. HARVEY (edd.), *History and Computing II*, Manchester 1989, p. 4.

9 N. BULST, "Prosopography and the Computer: Problems and Possibilities," in DENLEY et al., *History and Computing II*, p. 12.

10 P. MAGDALINO, "The History of the Future and its Uses: Prophecy, Policy and Propaganda," in R. BEATON & C. ROUECHÉ (edd.), *The Making of Byzantine History*, Aldershot 1993, p. 3.

historical terms; then and only then is it possible to think of computer applications that could help solve the problem.

So what then is the problem? I take as my example the international collaborative research initiative *The Evergetis Project*, directed by Margaret E. Mullett, based at the Queen's University of Belfast, and funded by the British Academy and the Bank of Ireland. The purpose of the project is to examine the monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis, founded on family estates on the outskirts of Constantinople by Paul in 1049. Seeking a life of *hesychia*, Paul built a few cells and accepted the profession of a few like-minded hermits. Under Timothy, Paul of Evergetis's successor, the monastery was established, gaining buildings and a *typikon*.[12] Rather than these paltry details, however, it is the wealth of surviving documentary evidence that raises the Theotokos Evergetis Monastery from eleventh-century obscurity to centrality in a project examining eleventh-century Byzantine monasticism. The *Hypotyposis*[13] or administrative charter provides information on the foundation and administration of the monastery; the *Synaxarion*[14] guides us through the complexities of monastic rituals and observance; the *Synagoge*[15] and the *Catecheses*[16] provide insights into the

---

11 R. ENNALS, "Humanities and Computing," in S. RAHTZ (ed.), *Information Technology in the Humanities: Tools Techniques and Applications*, Chichester 1987, p. 15.

12 P. GAUTIER (ed.), "Le typikon de la Théotokos Evergetis," *REB* 40, 1982, pp. 5–101, at 15–17.

13 GAUTIER, "Evergetis"; English translations by R.H. JORDAN are to be published by Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations. The *Hypotyposis* survives in one manuscript, *Atheniensis graecus* 788 f.180–222^{v}.

14 The *Synaxarion* also survives only in *Athen. gr* 788 f.1–179^{r} (GAUTIER, "Evergetis," p. 13); A. DMIETRIEVSKIJ, *Opisanie liturgicesvich rukopisej, charjastichcja v bibliotekach pravoslavnago vostoka. I. Typika*, Kiev 1895, pp. 256–614. An English translation by R.H. JORDAN, with commentary by J. KLENTOS is in preparation, and will appear as volumes 3–5 of the Evergetis Series. A. THIERMEYER, *Der Codex Athensiensis 788, sein literarhistorischer Kontext und das Theotokos-Evergetis-Kloster zu Konstantinopel*, Rome 1990, is a study of the two typika and the manuscript *Ath.* 788.

15 The manuscript tradition of the *Synagoge* is long and complex, as the text survives in 68 manuscripts. B. CROSTINI, "Towards a Study of the Scriptorium of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis: Preliminary Remarks," in M.E. MULLETT & A. KIRBY (edd.), *The Theotokos Evergetis and Eleventh-century Monasticism*, Belfast 1994, pp. 176–197. First edited in Venice in 1783, the *Synagoge* has been reprinted many times. The project uses the Athens 1988–90 reprint, which also contains a Modern Greek translation. The *Synagoge* will be published by the project in

interior of the monastic life. The *Synagoge*, published in four volumes which weigh in at over half a million words or 5 kilos,[17] consists of four books of fifty topics each organised as progressive milestones on the journey to achieve the spiritual life. Each topic consists of a statement of the matter under consideration[18] and a number of stories chosen to illustrate and explain the point. In spite of the wealth of the surviving dossier however gaps remain in our sources for the Theotokos Evergetis. There is no surviving archaeological evidence for the monastery; there is no known hoard of liturgical objects.[19] There are no documents that deal with the day-to-day details of economic administration.[20] Nine manuscripts have been identified as the product of the monastery's scriptorium,[21] but it remains to be established if this is a complete catalogue.[22] A prayer to the Virgin, identified as the work of Paul of Evergetis (the founder) has been previously

---

translation in five volumes (*Introduction*, R.H. JORDAN *et al.*; *Book I*, R.H. JORDAN; *Book II*, J. TURNER; *Book III*, M.J. McGANN; *Book IV*, M. Cunningham CORRAN).

16 On the Catecheses, see J. LEROY, "Un nouveau témoin de la grande catéchèse de S. Théodore Studite," *REB* 15, 1957, pp. 73–88. B. CROSTINI, "The Catechesis of Evergetis: an edition, translation and commentary," MPhil research in progress under the supervision of Dr. J. Munitiz.

17 J. WORTLEY, "The Genre and Sources of the *Evergetinon*," in MULLETT & KIRBY, *Evergetis and Eleventh-century Monasticism*, pp. 306–324

18 For example, "That no one should ever dispair of himself, even if he has committed many sins, but should hope for salvation through repentence" (Book I, hypothesis 1); "That those who make themselves contemptible are held in honour by God" (Book II, hypothesis 1); "That we must not form judgements founded on suspicions nor have complete faith in suspicions" (Book III, hypothesis 1); and "That unpossessiveness has been proclaimed for the monk and what is the sign of one who is free of emotion, and how the fathers achieved this" (Book IV, hypothesis 1).

19 L. RODLEY "Evergetis: where it was and what it looked like," MULLETT & KIRBY, *Evergetis and Eleventh-century Monasticism*, pp. 17–29.

20 A. HARVEY, "Land, Taxation and Trade in the Eleventh-century Monastic Economy: the Case of Evergetis," paper 8, MULLETT and KIRBY, *Evergetis and Eleventh-century Monasticism*, pp. 124–136.

21 J. IRIGOIN, "Paléographie et codicologie: la production d'un scriptorium de Constantinople peu après le milieu du XIe siècle," *Miscellanea codicologica F Masia dicata*, I, Ghent 1979, pp. 175–183.

22 J. WARING, "Byzantine Monastic Libraries in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," PhD research in progress under the supervision of Dr. M.E. Mullett. Waring is also examining aspects of the monastic reception of literary texts.

signalled,[23] but whether other examples of the founder's voice survive is yet to be established.

The stated intention of the project is to study the surviving texts of the dossier in relation to one another and together in relation to the perceived problems of eleventh- and twelfth-century monasticism.[24] By presenting the results of this study with the supporting evidence in an accessible form, this rich data will enable the full interpretation of an obscure period in the religious life of Byzantium, too late for iconoclasm yet too early for hesychasm.

Computer science research is dominated by two fields at present: database technology and artificial intelligence. Computer scientists treat these as insulated domains: database technology dealing with large amounts of relatively simple data and artificial intelligence dealing with tiny amounts of highly complex data. The sheer quantity of the source-texts of *The Evergetis Project* coupled with the desire to engage seriously with them[25] as candidates for intertextual study[26] provides an unrivalled opportunity for co-operative research in Byzantine studies and in computer science.[27]

Given the complexity of the subject matter of the *Evergetis Project* and the range of sources to be incorporated, the ideal computer solution would be an expert system,[28] consisting of a knowledge base of domain-specific information [in this case eleventh-century Byzantine monasticism] accessed through a shell made up of an inference engine[29] and a user interface. The

---

23 J. LEROY, "Un nouveau témoin de la grande catéchèse de S. Théodore Studite," *REByz* 15, 1957, pp. 73–88.

24 R. MORRIS, "The Political Saint of the Eleventh Century," in S. HACKEL (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint,* London 1981, pp. 43–50, and P. MAGDALINO, "The Byzantine Holy Man in the Twelfth Century," ibid., pp. 51–66.

25 M. ALEXIOU, "Literary Subversion and the Aristocracy in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: A Stylistic Analysis of the *Timarion* (ch. 6–10)," *BMGS* 8, 1982–83, p. 45; R. MACRIDES & P. MAGDALINO, "The Architecture of Ekphrasis: Construction and Context of Paul the Silentiary's Poem on Haghia Sophia," *BMGS* 12, 1988, pp. 47–82; M.E. MULLETT, "Dancing with Deconstructionists in the Gardens of the Muses: New Literary History vs ?," *BMGS* 14, 1990, pp. 258–275.

26 R.H. JORDAN, "The Intertextuality of the *Hypotyposis* of Evergetis," PhD research in progress under the supervision of Dr. M.E. Mullett.

27 M. THALLER, "The Need for a Theory of Historical Computing," in Danley et al., *History and Computing II*, p. 4.

28 T.J. SCHULTE, "Artificial Intelligence Techniques for Historians: Expert Systems, Knowledge Representation and High-Level Programming," in DENLEY et al., *History and Computing II*, pp. 90–96.

29 J. CARVALHO, "Expert Systems and Community Reconstruction Studies" in DENLEY et al., *History and Computing II*, pp. 100–102.

inference engine uses the information contained in the knowledge base to calculate the probability or likelihood of certain outcomes, given certain input conditions. The user interface provides a means for the historian to access the information stored in the knowledge base, without having to understand the detail of the probability calculations of the inference engine. An "*Evergetis Expert System*" would contain all [sic] known information about the Evergetis monastery in a knowledge base, written perhaps in a declarative language such as Prolog.[30] This information would be accessed through an interactive interface, designed with historian-users of differing levels (undergraduate, postgraduate, researcher) in mind. The presence of "fuzzy logic"[31] in the inference engine means that the computer, rather than returning a Boolean value of "true" of "false", is able to deal with uncertainty (within prescribed parameters) and reply "maybe", usually quantifying the uncertainty as a probability. The nature of history is to have fuzzy data[32] — data that is obviously incomplete or vague — and this suggests that when computerising history, we would do well to use systems that apply "fuzzy logic" to "fuzzy data". Fuzzy logic, refined by predefined prompts given by the system to elucidate further the line of questioning the user is attempting to pursue, enables an expert system to provide a "best fit" between the original user-query and the information stored in the system. It is this ability to achieve a "best fit" that suggests that expert systems can "think".

The creation of such an expert system would be at the leading edge of the capabilities of the current fourth generation machines. As "leading edge" technology is often a euphemism for "doesn't quite work right yet", the Evergetis Project has taken the cautious approach stressing the use of available technology to deliver useable outcomes. Rather than the global expert system, therefore, we have concentrated on the abstract[33] schema of the

---

30 C. BOURLET & J.-L. MINEL, "A Declarative System for Setting Up a Prosopographical Database," in DENLEY & HOPKIN (edd.), *History and Computing*, pp.186–191.

31 B. KOSKO, *Fuzzy Thinking*, London, 1993.

32 E. MAWDSLEY & T. MUNCK, *Computing for Historians: an Introductory Guide*, Manchester 1993, p. 102; M. THALLER, "The Need for a Theory of Historical Computing," in DENLEY et al., *History and Computing II*, p. 7.

33 Abstraction is a central concept in all aspects of information technology as presently understood. As a principle of software engineering, it encourages the development of optimum solutions by a strict separation of the conceptual solution from the constraints and limiting factors of hardware and software: L. GOLDSCHLAGER & A. LISTER, *Computer Science: A Modern Introduction*, Hemel Hempstead 1988, pp. 20–24; J.G. HUGHES, *Database Technology: A Software Engineering Approach*, Hemel Hempstead 1988, pp. 1–5; R.W. MATHISEN, "Medieval Prosopography and

Evergetis Project, which views it as dealing with three clusters of information: to do with texts; to do with people; and to do with objects.[34] This is the abstract view from the historian's perspective; the systems designer views the matter slightly differently, as two functionally distinct aspects: text-based materials whether source-texts or translations; and object- and person-based information on the other.

In the system currently in operation for the Evergetis Project text-based data, i.e. either Greek text, translation or commentary, is entered and stored in files under the Microsoft *Word for Windows*[35] program, with *WinGreek*[36] to enable the printing and on-screen manipulation of the full Greek character set. Intertextual analysis has not yet begun, but it is hoped to follow the model provided by the Modern Greek Database based in King's College, London.[37]

In regard to information about people and objects, a range of mutually compatible databases is being designed and implemented to record and analyse data. The division of the datasets into separate databases is merely to facilitate design and ensure data integrity at this stage. The first step in the implementation of an expert system for the Evergetis Project will be the integration of all discrete datasets into one global project database.

A database is a collection of logically structured information, together with a means of gaining access to that information. The non-computerised example frequently cited is the telephone directory, with each telephone subscriber recorded with the information: name, address, exchange, telephone number in that order and then the records ordered alphabetically by surname.

Computers: Theotical and Methodological Considerations," *Medieval Prosopography* 9:2, 1988, p. 78; B.T. MYNATT, *Software Engineering with Student Project Guidance*, Bowling Green OH 1990, p. 53.

34 From the perspective of a systems-designer, four processes are required in each of these areas: inputting data; storing data; processing data; and outputting data. An implementation of an Evergetis system would provide for these four procedures in each of the three data areas.

35 Microsoft *Word for Windows*, version 2.0a, Microsoft Corporation, 1989–92.

36 *Beta Greek Accent Utility*, version 2.15, A. FOUNTAIN 1991 & 1992. Part of the *WinGreek* ShareWare program developed by A.M. FOUNTAIN and P.J. GENTRY, 55 Ambercroft Blvd., Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1W 2Z6.

37 The Modern Greek Database carries out textual analysis by transforming Greek text files to ASCII format, processing them using the *Oxford Concordance Package* (*Micro-OCP* Oxford University Press, 1988) and then reconverting the ASCII output from *OCP* into Greek text files.

To the present audience, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*[38] provides a further familiar example. A non-computerised database (such as a telephone directory or *PLRE* as currently constituted) provides a common means to retrieve the data (frequently a numerical or alphabetical list). In contrast, a computerised database management system provides a common, unified and controlled method of inserting, deleting, modifying and retrieving the stored data, whilst enforcing the three important principles of the modern database management system.[39]

The actual design of a database rests on the apparently contradictory notions of data abstraction (the data should be abstracted from particular instances or occurrences and classified into types) and decomposition (the data should be broken down into its logically atomic components).[40] Any database has a five-stage lifecycle: requirements analysis; data modelling; implementation; testing; and maintenance.[41] The last three are implementation dependent: the actual computers and programs used determine exactly how they proceed. Here, I concentrate on the first two stages, which are the most important in determining the shape of the final product.[42] This stress on requirements analysis and data modelling is to ensure the delivery of a system that does what it was meant to do.[43]

The first step in analysing the system is to represent the logical structure of the information as a conceptual abstraction of the real world situation[44] to be mapped onto an actual computer implementation later. Representing the logical structure of the data requires knowledge of what questions are

---

38 *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vols. I-III, ed. J.R. MARTINDALE et al., Cambridge 1971–92.

39 Namely: 1) data independence: the separation of data from any process which uses it; b) data integrity: particular pieces of information should be presented once and once only within a system; c) data description: the recognition that data and meta-data should be represented and manipulated in the same way. Lou Bernard, "Principles of Database Design," in S. RAHTZ (ed.), *Information Technology in the Humanities: Tools, Techniques and Applications*, Chichester 1987, p. 56.

40 HUGHES, *Database Technology*, p. 13.

41 HUGHES, *Database Technology*, pp. 9–13.

42 Having said that, however, it should be remembered that the process of software development is iterative, and problems experienced in the implementation phase may highlight flaws previously undetected in the analysis and data modelling phases.

43 MYNATT, *Software Engineering*, pp. 5–7.

44 Richard ENNALS, "Humanities and Computing," in Rahtz *Information Technology in the Humanities*, pp. 15–16.

important, how to ask them and what form they will take.[45] The conceptual model, being independent of any specific implementation, provides a neutral meeting ground for the historian and the designer of the system,[46] to ensure that the system can attempt to answer the questions that the historian will want to ask. At this point it is necessary to identify and select those items of information from the historical record that are of specific interest to the historian.[47] This requires strict historical discipline, and strong will-power:

> If the schedule is too detailed nothing very significant will come out of it. The lacunae in every file will be too numerous. If on the other hand it is too restricted only banalities will result.[48]

With a clear understanding of the historical reality to be computerised[49] it is then feasible to move on to the creation of the conceptual model. There are three styles of mapping such a conceptualisation of a logical data structure onto an implementation: the network,[50] the hierarchical,[51] and the relational. Both the network and hierarchical data models, though still current because of the numerous commercial applications supporting them, have given way to the relational data model conceived by Codd which is

---

45 MAWDSLEY & MUNCK, *Computing for Historians*, p. 55; N. BULST, "Prosopography and the Computer: Problems and Possibilities," in DENLEY et al., *History and Computing II*, p. 15.

46 L. BERNARD, "Principles of Database Design" in Rahtz, *Information Technology*, p. 58.

47 N. BULST, "Prosopography and the Computer: Problems and Possibilities," in Denley et al., *History and Computing II*, p. 13.

48 BULST, "Prosopography and the Computer," in Denley et al., *History and Computing II*, p. 16.

49 MAWDSLEY & MUNCK, *Computing for Historians*, p. 105.

50 The network data model consists of record types and links representing relationships between entity sets. It is represented as a directed graph of nodes (the record types) connected by arcs which represent and define the relationships between the data objects. In a network data model self-referential links are not usually permitted: HUGHES, *Database Technology*, pp. 51–52.

51 The hierarchical database, which may be considered as a special subset of the network data model, is based on tree structures with record types as nodes. It is a collection of disjoint trees with record occurrences as nodes and the data objects related to each other in the hierarchy of the tree structure. No record type may be related to itself. If the data is not naturally structured in a hierarchy — as is usually the case — then the use of a hierarchical model imposes it unnaturally on the data, and violates the principle of data independence: HUGHES, *Database Technology*, pp. 63–64.

based on the mathematical theory of relations and first-order logic.[52] In this model, data objects and relations are represented in two dimensional arrays, as tables, with each instance of the entity being represented by a row or tuple of the table. Three primitive operations are possible in the relational model: select, which extracts a subset of the rows in a table using some procedure that can be evaluated against each row in isolation; project, which extracts a subset of the columns in a table eliminating any duplicate rows; and join which combines two tables to form a third by means of some shared column. It has been demonstrated that these operations are sufficient for the construction of a complete relational algebra and that query languages which implement them are therefore mathematically complete.[53]

To create an entity relationship data model,[54] the entities in any given system or situation are identified and described first. Entities may be objects, people or events, but must have real existence. One entity type of the Prosopography of the Evergetis Project database is obviously "person". Given the nature of the project, a second is "monastery"; and a third is "text" to record information about the source. An entity is described by a variable number of attributes; many attributes can be ascribed to individuals to describe them in a meaningful way. By way of illustration I present the fields used by the *Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire* (fig. 1). Here can be seen the 44 fields considered necessary to record all possible information about a Byzantine individual. The entity name and the associated attributes make up the record of which there are numerous instances. Each instance of an entity type must have a unique identifying attribute, called the key

---

52 E.F. CODD, "A Relational Model of Data for Large Shared Data Banks," *Communications of the Association for Computing Machinery* 13, 1970, pp. 377–387.

53 L. BERNARD, "Principles of Database Design," in RAHTZ, *Information Technology*, p. 65.

54 P.P.S. CHEN, "The Entity Relationship Model: Towards a Unified View of Data," *Association for Computing Machinery Transactions on Database Systems* 1:1, 1976, pp. 9–36. See M. GREENHALGH, "Databases for Art Historians: Problems and Possibilities," in DENLEY & HOPKIN, *History and Computing*, p. 161 for the view that the relational database is the vision of the future, but note the caveat sounded by M. THALLER, "The Need for a Theory of Historical Computing," in DENLEY et al., *History and Computing II*, p. 3, though this should be understood in light of his view that historical computing should be determined by historical methodology, not by technological constraints.

attribute.[55] Given that the individuals to be recorded in the Prosopography of the Evergetis Project are religious, it might be suggested that only those attributes which relate to the religious life should be included in the entity type. Whilst this approach might work in an ideal world, the world of the Byzantine religious was a paradox of contradictions between the idealised norms and reality, and though separated from the world, they remained part of it. Furthermore, a major intention of the Evergetis Project is to examine the role of the Evergetis Monastery in its wider contexts, both Byzantine monasticism in the eleventh and twelfth centuries but also the connections between lay and religious society. It was for this reason that the specific relationship "is_a" was introduced to refine the information that can be recorded about individuals in general.[56] Thus in the Prosopography of the Evergetis Project all individuals are of the entity type "person" and share the attributes shown in figure 2. Some individuals form a subset of the class "person", namely the religious. As PEP is primarily envisaged as a database to do with people, the entities "monasteries" and "texts" are described in PEP by limited attributes.[57] The full meaningful description by attribute of those entity types is reserved for their respective separate databases.

The relationships that join entitics together are then identified and described.[58] In dealing with the relationships linking persons, I began by listing them (mother, wife, sister and so on). However, as this went against the idea of data abstraction, I grouped relationships into types: by blood, by

---

55 When designing a database, it is usual for a number of attributes to be candidates for key attribute. The question of which candidate is to serve as the key is resolved during normalisation.

56 HUGHES, *Database Technology*, pp. 23–25.

57 In the case of the Monastery-entities: key-attribute of "M" + number, the common short name and the page reference to Janin's handbooks; for the texts: key-attribute of "T" + number, and a common reference name to give some quick notion of the texts.

58 L. BERNARD, "Principles of Database Design," in RAHTZ, *Information Technology*, p. 59. A relationship between entities may be one of three kinds: one instance of an entity may be joined to one other instance of an entity (known as one-to-one [1:1]); one instance of an entity may be joined to many instances of an entity (one-to-many [1:N]); or many instances of an entity may be joined to many other instances of an entity type (many-to-many [N:M]). This is the functionality of a relationship. If every instance of an entity must participate in a certain relationship, then membership class of the entity type is said to be mandatory in that relationship; otherwise the membership class is optional. By convention the functionality of a relationship and its membership class (whether mandatory or optional) is noted on an entity relationship diagram. Relationships are also described by a variable number of attributes.

marriage,[59] spiritual kinship,[60] in space, by work, by education, by friendship,[61] by patronage.[62] These are the involuted relationships[63] which link different instances of the entity type "person" with one or more instances of the same entity type (fig. 3). The attributes of these relationships include the Greek term used to describe the relation in the sources, an English rendition of its meaning, a source location and the two personal name identifiers to identify the individual entities involved in the relationship. The next range of relationships are ones which link instances with the entity types "person" or "religious" with the entity types "monastery" or "text". In this database, the link between religious and text is simply "is_mentioned_in". It is a mandatory relationship, in that all instances of the entity "religious" must be mentioned in at least one text.[64] The relationships that connect instances of "religious" and "monasteries" are more numerous, and include: "made_profession_at", "founded", "refounded", "was_hegoumenos_in", "joined", "left" and "died_in". Given the nature of the evidence, all these relationships are optional.

The implementation of an entity relational data model proceeds by transforming the entity-relationship model into a relational schema. There is no mechanical method for achieving the optimum transformation, but a logical treatment of the problem is best. To begin with, each entity is listed with its attributes, usually in the form: *ENTITY* (*KEYATTRIBUTE; ATTRIBUTE1; ATTRIBUTE2...*). Mandatory and optional relations are then listed in the same way, as are attributes specific to the relationships. Involuted relationships are treated much in the same way, though if the relationship is of the type "many-to-many" the key attribute must be the unique identifying keys for the two individuals involved. The relational representation of a subtype (the "is_a" relationship) contains the key attribute of the parent type, together with any other attributes specific to the subtype.

---

59 C.C. HARRIS, *Kinship*, Minneapolis 1990; STIERNON, "Sébaste et Gambros," *REB* 23, 1965, pp. 222–243.

60 R. MACRIDES, "The Byzantine Godfather," *BMGS* 11, 1987, pp. 139–162.

61 J. BOISSEVAIN, *Friends of Friends: Network, Manipulators and Coalitions*, Oxford 1978; M.E. MULLETT, "Byzantium: A Friendly Society," *Past and Present* 118, 1988, pp. 3–24.

62 M.E. MULLETT, "Patronage in Action: the Problems of an Eleventh-Century Bishop," in R. MORRIS, *Church and People in Byzantium*, Birmingham n.d., pp. 125–147.

63 HUGHES, *Database Technology*, pp. 22–23.

64 "Text" here is broadly constructed to include seals, inscriptions and the like as well as documentary and literary evidence.

Care taken when transforming the entity relational model to the relational schema will remove the necessity to deal with normalisation.

Normalisation is the process of refining a relational scheme to remove ambiguities or inconsistencies in the representation of the data. Most simply put, all attributes should be atomic or should depend directly on the key identifiers (attributes) of the entity or relation in which they occur. The six normalised forms[65] are logically formulated methods of trapping attributes which are only partially dependent on the key attribute. If required, the process of normalisation proceeds by decomposing a relationship into its constituent parts, so that each attribute of each new relationship is fully functionally dependent on the key attribute of the relation.

In attempting to explain the process of computerisation, I have been captured by details of implementation and have lost sight of abstraction. Using computers as Byzantinists we make our data conform to conceptualised schemata. In doing so, we are not "falsifying" data, nor misinterpreting the sources, *providing that* we construct the abstract schemata as historians, insulated to an extent from what we may be told is possible in the current (or future) world of computer hyper-reality. Serious use of the power of fifth-generation computers by Byzantinists will only be achieved if historians determine the historically significant questions and arrange the storage, manipulation and retrieval of the data in ways that are most likely to provide answers to those questions.

---

65 First, second, third normal form, Boyce-Codd normal form, fourth and fifth normal form: HUGHES, *Database Technology*, pp. 35–42.

Figure 1

Record Fields for the Prosopography of
The Byzantine Empire

(After Martindale)

1	Record Name Field		2	Variant Names	
3	Other Names		4	Family Names	
5	First Date		6	First date Type	
7	Last Date		8	Last Date Type	
9	Floruit		10	Nationality	
11	Place of Birth		12	Description	
13	Sex		14	Manner of Death	
15	Exclusion		16	Parents	
17	Siblings		18	Spouses	
19	Children		20	Other Family	
21	Education		22	Religion	
23	Languages		24	Literary works	
25	Commiss-ions given		26	Commissions	
27	Occupations		28	Responsibilities	
29	Career & Titles		30	Activities	
31	Teachers		32	Pupils	
33	Letters to		34	Letters from	

35	Employers		36	Employees	
37	Patrons		38	Clients	
39	Friends		40	Residences	
41	Possessions		42	Topographical	
43	Sources		44	Bibliography	
45	Article				

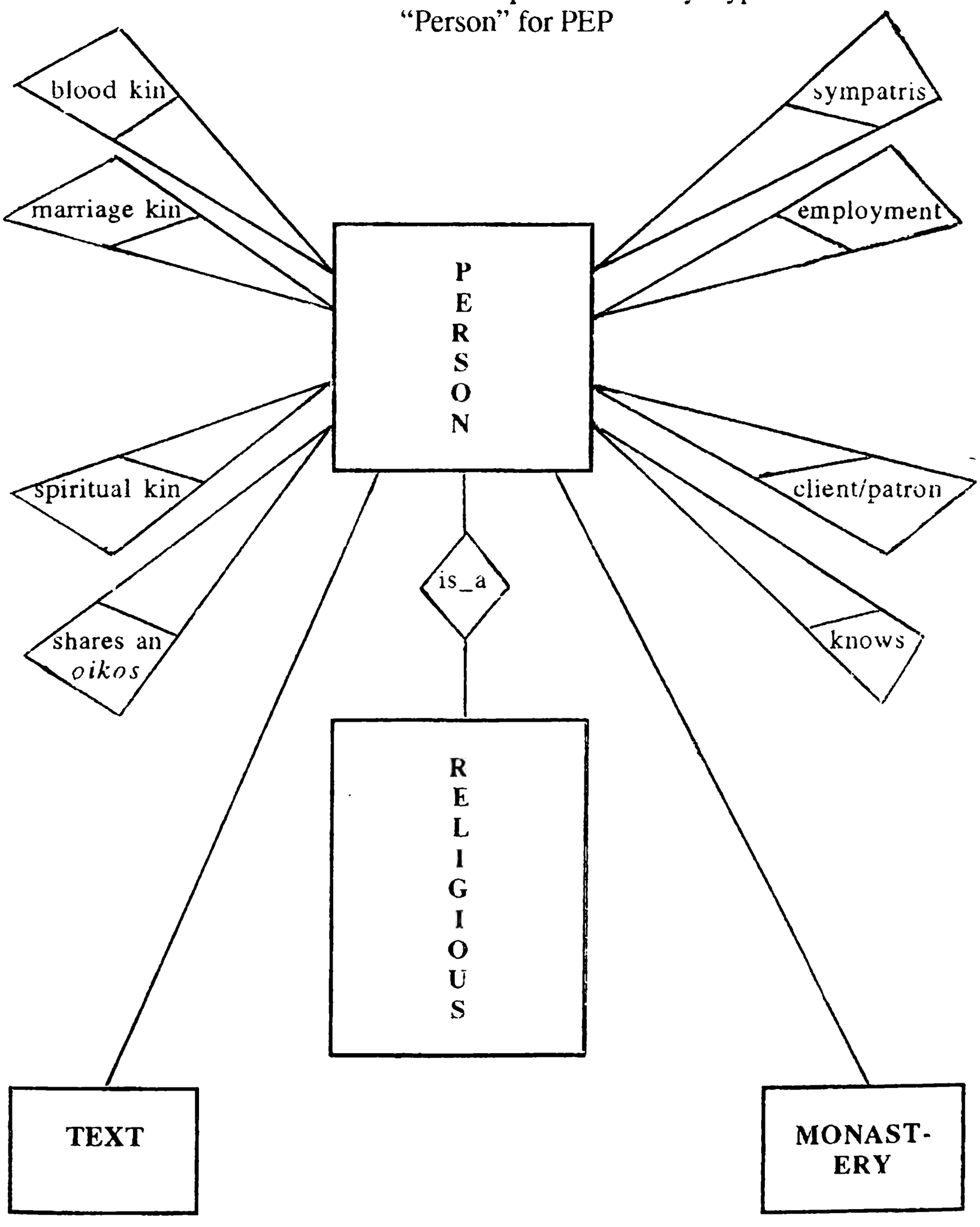
Figure 2

Attributes of the Entity Type "Person" For PEP

1	Record Name Field		2	Variant Names	
3	Other Names		4	Family Names	
5	First Date		6	First date Type	
7	Last Date		8	Last Date Type	
9	Floruit		10	Ethnic Group	
11	Place of Birth		12	Description	
13	Sex		14	Manner of Death	
15	Education		16	Religion	
17	Languages		18	Literary works	
19	Occupations		20	Responsibilit-ies	
21	Career & Titles		22	Activities	
23	Topograph-ical		24	Residences	
25	Possessions		26	Sources	
27	Bibliography		28	Article	

Figure 3

Involuted Relationships of the Entity Type "Person" for PEP



BYZANTIUM AND ITS FUTURE: 2

SOME LATTER-DAY BYZANTINE NON-CONFORMISTS FROM THE PROSE OF PATRICK WHITE

John Ryan / University of New England

Through Manoly Lascaris, White entered a world that seemed waiting to receive him. He found his imagination fired by the Greeks and stories of the Byzantine past, a history both splendid and miserable, of marble veined with blood, all so at odds with the Anglo-Saxon existence of [the] Whites ....

> The Lascaris family had lost almost everything in the twentieth century except an antique name, imperial snobbery, Athenian connections and the adaptive strength that allowed them to survive centuries of wandering. Their story linked two Greek misfortunes that came to haunt White: the loss of Byzantium and the Catastrophe of Smyrna. There was much exotic, bloody detail to master.
>
> David Marr, *Patrick White. A Life,* Sydney 1991, p. 214.

> As for Greek family history, outsiders cannot hope to penetrate what they are expected to accept.
>
> Eudoxia Vatatzes in Patrick White,
> *The Twyborn Affair: A Novel*, London 1979, p. 25.

Patrick White (1912–1990), when still very much the apprentice novelist, in 1941 joined the Royal Air Force in England after having lived there for many years and served for the rest of that war as an intelligence officer in the Middle East. After a period in Khartoum and being there concerned with the Eritrean campaign, he was posted to Alexandria, which cosmopolitan city was experiencing a strange cultural renaissance and complacency which would soon pass. As the novelist's biographer would observe of that time:

> The city still thrived on fabulous extremes of wealth and need. Poverty was Egyptian; wealth was Greek, Jewish, Syrian, French and British.
>
> White had come to Alexandria with a letter of introduction to one of the great Jewish families .... The Menasce were Sephardim.[1]

This particular letter caused White to be invited to visit Charles Menasce's house and so meet Manoly Lascaris, and thus to establish an alliance between two men of the same age that would last to the end of the novelist's life.

---

1 D. MARR, *Patrick White*, p. 212.

Their temperaments — the one possessed of wry forbearance, the other prone to bursts of black rage — complemented each other and for the next six years, as the war drove both back and forth across the Levant, they maintained a flat in Alexandria in the Rue Safia Zaghloul. In that place and in that developing emotional relationship White found so many of the themes he was seeking for his developing art — a background of genuine human suffering, an immediate past which Manoly and Alexandria made come alive in his hands, the cultural formality of educated Alexandrian Greeks, escape from a cloying English literary heritage, and a chance to observe through Manoly's eyes the reality of the exciting play of life in the Greek world of the Eastern Mediterranean. What came to interest him most at that time — and for the rest of his life — was the varied "Greek" world which once spread as far west as Sicily[2] and included the whole Levant.

White was at once at home in this milieu,[3] both because of Manoly and because through him he could feel the surrounding culture in his bones. As the biographer has put it, after the novelist's death,

> Almost everything White wrote after that time bears traces of the history, ancient and modern of the Lascaris family.[4]

Indeed, if we may anticipate, he then added:

> Fragments of Byzantine genealogies, the sufferings of Smyrna, the squalor and magnificence of the Orthodox faith — the persistence of civilizations in exile — all became part of White's experience (ibid.).

Doubtless all these attitudes were supported by the strength of Manoly's religious faith in the face of White's anger at (Australian) Anglicanism, for long after the pair's coming in 1948 to reside permanently in Australia, Marr would report of their merging beliefs:

> Lascaris remained the Orthodox Greek he had always been, a man who lived by plain notions of holiness. Through him White absorbed the superstitions of

---

2 Sicily is treated in his "Sicilian Vespers" (pp. 197-258) of *The Cockatoos*, London 1974, Italy more briefly in the "Epilogue" to his *Memoirs of Many in One*, London 1986.

3 A similar comment could well be made of the poet of Alexandria, Constantine Cavafy (1868–1933), a Greek speaking the mother-tongue yet never living in the mother-country.

4 MARR, *Patrick White*, p. 218. See also for background M. MACLAGAN, "A Byzantine Princess in Portugal," pp. 284–293, in S. ROBERTSON & G. HENDERSON (edd.), *Studies in Memory of David Talbot Rice*, Edinburgh 1975.

> the Orthodox faith. Icons hung at Dogwoods [at Castle Hill]; they believed in saints and holy places. They celebrated Greek Easter ... (p. 358).

But that is an anticipation. At the end of the war White had resolved that Greece was where he wished to be for the rest of his life, it offering the ideal for which he yearned —

> not only the perfection of antiquity, but that of nature, and the warmth of human relationships expressed in daily living ...[5]

Fate determined otherwise and after spending a year in Greece after that country's liberation, he turned again to Australia. Thus in his first post-war novel *The Aunt's Story* (1948) Australia is seen in a peculiarly Greek way, notably by the character Moraïtis,[6] a cellist visiting Sydney who explains that his own is "a bare country. Australia, too, is all bones" (p. 112), and, like his native land, "a primitive country" (p. 110). He describes himself as a peasant, from the Peloponnese, paradoxically:

> "a rich, fat, purple country, but underneath you can feel the bones. Many people were killed there: Greeks die often ... Greeks are happiest dying. All the Greek monuments suggest a continuity of life .... Pure life. But the Greeks are born to die" (p. 113).

When he plays his 'cello the music heard is full of simple shapes with "the purity of simple vision" (p. 116).

The first Greek encounter for that text's central figure, the spinster, Theodora Goodman, is treated in Homeric epic terms, notably in those of the *Odyssey*'s account of Odysseus' escape from the disaster at Troy, then landing in Phaecia and the Nausicaä episode (Books v–vi) and his own actual landing in Ithaca (Book xiii), these experiences being now transferred to Theodora — "she swam through the sea of roses towards that other Ithaca" (p. 111). But there is a further Greek and more Byzantine/Levantine strand to the plot in the character of the young girl, Katina Pavlou whom Theodora meets in the second portion of the novel, who has been deserted by her parents and, accompanied by a dreary English maid-companion, passes from one dismal pension to another. She, Katina, introduces herself with the oracular "life is full of sadness" (p. 182) and her identification with her doomed aunt Smaragda is soon established —

---

5 WHITE, "The Prodigal Son," 1958, reprinted in WHITE, *Patrick White Speaks*, 1989, p. 14.

6 He is described in a manner which suggests Lascaris — "a small dark man, opaque ... and physical" (MARR, *Patrick White*, p. 110).

> " ... Aunt Smaragda ... lives alone in Athens. She had an unfortunate love affair in Smyrna with someone who went away."
>
> The shells on the shores of Asia Minor echoed faintly the misfortune of Aunt Smaragda ...
>
> "Aunt Smaragda has the Great Idea. She says that as Greeks are born to die, then they can die best on the road to Constantinople. She prays for Byzantium. She prays for the day when the saints[7] will blaze with gold" (p. 185).

The further musings aloud of Katina serve to contrast the two sorts of Greeks known to the girl — those who mindlessly "follow the season" (p. 186) like her own parents,[8] and those who, like Smaragda, have suffered, know "the legend of death" (p. 228), and have become "the amazed and frightened instrument recording some climatic disturbance" (p. 232). She is one of the last kind, born to suffer and it was necessary that the sea fold and unfold for her (p. 241). While the text contains many Homeric parallels in the experiences of both Theodora and Katina, the latter is most fully Byzantine in her understanding of the inevitable agonies of a truly experienced adult life — "It was necessary that Katina Pavlou should discover fire" (p. 238) — as the other woman reflects. And our last image of the girl is her acceptance of seduction — "Because she has chosen. She has chosen this as the moment of experience" (p. 249). Katina is then said to have begun her adult life with a sexual happening, "nauseating and painful, that one did not suspect. It is better finally to know" (p. 253).

The next major published images of Byzantium — Smyrna occur in the earlier collection of White's short stories, *The Burnt Ones* (1964). The first of the "Greek" tales collected up into this volume,[9] "A Glass of Tea", is a seemingly enigmatic account of a casual introduction from an English friend, followed up by a visit by the cultured but indecisive Greek, Malliakas, to a wealthy much older couple now living in Switzerland near Geneva. The younger man, a would-be writer, is unfortunately too rich in worldly goods but "not rich enough in spiritual ways to make the grander gestures in life" (p. 88), a pointer which prepares the reader for the guest's passivity and seeming non-comprehension[10] of the past drama of such searing proportions.

---

7 An authorial gloss on this comments: "Heavy with gold and silver, the icon faces of many aunts smouldered with Ideas" (p. 185).

8 Compare Katina's ever fugitive parents with the like exiles in *The Burnt Ones*, 1964.

9 London 1964, pp. 88–111.

10 We are told that, later, Malliakas will write down the haunting story (p. 93).

For the montage pattern of ten scenes, largely unlinked, makes us slowly aware that Philippides and Constantia had only really achieved any truth in their marriage by reason of their both enduring the terrible sack of Smyrna. Yet, even at the end of the tale, one is unsure how much Philippides had understood of the meaning of those events, since the historic conflagration is perhaps only truly comprehended by the then dying Constantia and White's bemused but slowly enlightened reader. For as has been well said:

> "A Glass of Tea" attempts to encompass all of Constantia's adult life and marriage by ... a few characteristic scenes illustrating ... the joy and the agony of her devotion to her husband.[11]

The story's patterning of mocking social comment on both Swiss sexuality and on the shallowness of Malliakas himself is changed subtly by the memories of the elderly Yanko Philippides of the experienced past. Somnolent at first, he comes to a sudden alertness as he thinks of his first wife Constantia, recalling her competence in languages (p. 90); her numerous unusual accomplishments; her hatreds; and that she was "a passionate, a difficult woman. But worth the suffering involved" (p. 91). In a patter of Near East names — Konya, Chios and Athens — it becomes clear that the important time was "the Smyrna days" (p. 90), their leaving by sea, their lives "reduced by a shuffle of history ... on the deck of the destroyer, after the sack of their city" (ibid). In a passage of great power, the romantic exoticism of their bored if cultured and polyglot life in the Levant is suddenly succeeded by the dramatic and horrific account of the Smyrna holocaust and the destruction of the affluent yet innocent life[12] which they had so taken for granted.

> None of that rabble of sufferers — wet, singed, bleeding, deformed by the agony of their first historic situation — none of them *knew* any more, as they stood in their fashionable rags and watched their city burn (pp. 96–97).

From that half-hearted rescue "of doubtful mercy" (ibid.), and as a corpse floats by "nuzzling peacefully at the water" (p. 98), the Philippides are

---

11 D. MYERS, *The Peacocks and the Bourgeoisie: Ironic Vision in Patrick White's Shorter Prose Fiction*, Adelaide 1978, p. 31.

12 Most of the surviving written descriptions of the sack of Smyrna by the Turks in 1922 were fragments in diaries and letters. In 1972 Marjorie HOUSEPIAN, herself of Armenian descent, would write, in her *Smyrna 1922: The Destruction of a City*, London, the first authoritative and researched account of events within the city. There is little of the compassionate in the details given of the escape of the sixteen-year old Aristotle Onassis from the city (HOUSEPIAN, p. 151).

miraculously saved. As the old man tells the sickened Malliakas, it was "not the greatest of all disasters, except that it was our own" (ibid.). His wife's hitherto indifferent temper has been changed terribly, causing in her now a passionate love of her husband, and fretful boredom in his absence. Indeed the intensity of her feelings, once that she has truly lived and comprehended the meaning of human existence, causes her peasant servant women to call her "the Devil", and, significantly, for Kyria Assimina to scream:

> If she's not the Devil, who else is she? The Empress of Byzantium? (p. 100).

For the deeper meaning of the uneven yet haunting story this equation of modern Smyrna with ancient Byzantium is highly significant, since it tells us that those who have emerged, shocked, from the wreck of Smyrna/Byzantium have thereby experienced a richer and fuller life than those of a mindless mid-century West. Further, Yanko misses her so much because of his responses to the self-fulfilment, passion and commitment of that matured life, beside the uncomprehending "brown" girl servants and the insensitive Malliakas — a sharp and shrewdly mocking self-portrait of White himself — which would result in the younger Greek later becoming "so obsessed[13] by Constantia that he wrote her story", much as White did those, now telescoped into Constantia, of Manoly's women relatives of like fate.

The third of the published Greek tales in *The Burnt Ones* is "Being Kind to Titina", the antecedents to which are given by David Marr:

> "Being Kind to Titina" was a sketch[14] for a few fragments of an enormous novel White imagined himself writing at the very end of his career. "My Athenian Family" would be a trilogy tracing the vicissitudes of the Lascaris family in this century, beginning in Smyrna with "The Sweet Waters of Asia", then a volume set in Alexandria, and a third in Athens ... [The fragment] covers only a few years in the upbringing of a young man very like Manoly Lascaris, raised by snobbish but remarkable aunts in Alexandria and Athens.

On a surface level the story, initially set in the Greek circle in Alexandria, is concerned with an ironic reversal in manners, showing how a particularly awkward child outcast from Smyrna, Titina Stavridi, later flowers in form and personality and ultimately extends true understanding and (sexual) kindness to the young man, Dionysios, in a greater moral sense

---

13 As MARR tells us in *Patrick White*, p. 432, the story had drawn on their memories of Smyrna, as told to him by the aunt and grandmother of Manoly Lascaris.

14 As distinct from the planned novel. See MARR, *Patrick White*, pp. 400–401. The latter also tells how *Harper's* had wished to "bowdlerize" the story and "iron out" the prose (p. 410).

demonstrating how a superior should show sympathy to an inferior.[15] Thus she shows a mature sexual compassion to the now gauche and gangling still virginal young man. This seemingly central fable of the need for kindness is framed by passages describing the family of the narrator, Dionysios, who is first abandoned to a house of "melancholy" (p. 188) by his own parents[16] and then nurtured by his two eccentric aunts, Ourania and Thalia, both summoned to Egypt from Smyrna before the catastrophe for this necessary task.

The first, Ourania, who was "less stern than she seemed" (p. 188) is a political moralist, concerned that the children not give themselves airs and graces, and so selflessly busy that she seemed to the drifting youth:

> such a very good person. She read Goethe every morning ... She kept the Lenten fasts ... [ordering that the boys] wear the tunics of ordinary working-class children, because, she said, it was wrong to flaunt ourselves ... (p. 190).

And very soon she slaps the eldest boy, Aleko, for showing patronising vulgarity towards the lower class Smyrna refugees, and is next seen responsibly immersed in the long neglected family accounts. Very soon afterwards, in Athens, she causes them all to live more modestly, in order, as she stresses, "to have the wherewithal to help some of those poor people ... the refugees, pouring in from Anatolia" (p. 197), a purpose further assisted by taking Dionysios from school and putting him into the bank. At the time of the climactic event of the adult encounter with Titina she has dissuaded her nephew from the selfish indulgence of a holiday at Pelion, what "with all those refugees sleeping on mattresses in the hall" (p. 198).

The second aunt from Smyrna, also in Alexandria well before the "Catastrophe", to help with the neglected children, is Thalia, "the artistic one" — "nobody, said Fraulein Hoffman, could sing the German *Lieder* with such *Gefühl*" (p. 188). Although more of a background figure she is yet continuously active, and still remembered for the intensity of her practice of culture —

> at evening our Aunt Thalia playing the piano in the big *salon*, [giving] her interpretation of Schumann ... [singing] *une petite chanson spirituelle de votre Duparc* (p. 189) —

while in the afternoon heat she would recline in a quiet room "nibbling a raw carrot, and copying passages from R. Tagore" (p. 195), despite her sore eyes, for

---

15 MYERS, *The Peacocks and the Bourgeoisie*, p. 54.

16 Story references are to the text (pp. 188–205) in *The Burnt Ones* (1964).

> On account of the conjunctivitis Aunt Thalia was wearing her bottle-green eye-shade, which made her appear especially tragic. Altogether Aunt Thalia was like a masked figure in a tragedy (p. 195).

Yet she arouses herself to some form of common sense to fling aside the wretched bottle of baby's water, a simple peasant's offering to heal her poor eyes. Her final appearance is after the actual sack of Smyrna, when, now weeping hysterically she goes to the piano to express her sorrow musically — "Sweet and sticky, the music flowed, from under her always rather tentative hands" (p. 204).

The third aunt, Calliope, is a professor remembered for sudden arrivals from Paris, and always more of a background figure, yet recalled as one making the children "compose essays, and breathe deep" (p. 190). She is the politically aware one of the three, well able to argue out any such issue with the menfolk —

> "The Catastrophe," my Aunt Calliope had reached the shouting stage, "was the result of public apathy in one of the most backward countries of the world" (p. 204).

ever beating the air with her fists. In this mood of searing honesty she is more than able to blurt out the distasteful and horrible truth about Titina's life in Paris, as "A proper little *thing*! A little whore!" (p. 205)

The central part of this fragmentary yet sweeping plot is concerned with the poor young girl, Titina Stavridi, whose refugee family came to Alexandria to live almost opposite Dionysios' family. The girl's parents are "undesirable", but Ourania has determined that "Dionysios ... must be particularly kind to poor Titina" (p. 190), a child so insecure that she involuntarily piddled on her hostess' carpet, standing motionless —

> she might have been a statue, but an ugly one. Her legs seemed so very thick and lifeless. All those bows. And frilly pants ... a kind of little pock-mark on the side of her lumpy freckled nose... (p. 192).

Later the chaotic and unsupervised rich children cruelly torment Titina who however still remains determinedly loyal to Dionysios. As the years pass he becomes the more awkward one, uninitiated sexually and "nervous" and "idiotic".

Now in ironic reversal it is she who extends kindness and generosity[17] to the ineffectual young man, acting with a different morality from Ourania's, yet equally concerned for a suffering victim and choosing very charitably to

---

17 Paradoxically these are the qualities of, and perhaps learned from, her socially impossible Parisian protector, Jean Louis, p. 199.

remember his early behaviour towards her as kind — a magnanimity which finally causes him to "see at the bottom of her candid eyes, blue as only the Saronic Gulf ... the truth" (p. 200). Thus she initiates him into the mysteries of sex, with much tenderness, the which act is synonymous with her philosophy of "living in the world" (p. 199), of spending the money one has (p. 201), revealing a life of "sumptuous, yet practical behaviour" (p. 201) and accepting the "splendour" of human existence. She gives him the education that he needs, to become confident, and to "understand" as a man should. As the hitherto irksome Athenian landscape is now seen as "splendid ... in its own way, of perfectly fulfilled austerity" (p. 201), so he is now "suave, compact" (p. 202), having overcome at last the loss of the timeless "unbroken" bliss of his own Alexandria, or childhood, and now come to a moment of fulfilment, symbolised by his hearing clearly the simple accordion music, "as gentle and persuasive as wood-pigeons" (p. 203).

At the tale's conclusion the young man is humiliated by Aunt Calliope's statement that Titina is a whore, a disclosure that is linked somehow with Ourania's oracular prophecy that "when blood flows our poor Greece is regenerated" (p. 204), and further underscored with Thalia's strains of music, "the intolerable Schumann" which pursues Dionysios like the torment of life itself. Titina is the source of immediacy, because of her sharp and appealing personality: both "Byzantine" in her situation and character and yet, like Katina Pavlou, she possesses at once the intense clarity of an individual symbol and the reality of a living person. For all these Smyrna women have become part of a myth, one giving these fragments of narrative a remarkable unity and strength.

The last and most explicitly Byzantine "Smyrna" story — placed second in *The Burnt Ones* — is "The Evening at Sissy Kamara's"[18] a tale of reunion and recollection. While it may be interpreted in a number of ways, its core is the set of memories of her girlhood experiences in Smyrna some forty years earlier which come to Poppy Pantzopoulos, while in the dentist's chair in modern Sydney. Thus she feels it her "duty" to keep a rotten tooth, and "to test her capacity for suffering" (p. 134), since, as she says, she is Greek — but, more subconsciously, to suffer again for those who died back there so long ago. Thus the story is a series of flashbacks, alternating between a recent dinner-party at the home of her lifelong friend, Sissy Kamara, also from Anatolia, and certain traumatic moments recalled from her own last days in Smyrna. The story's numinous object "almost the only material possession" rescued at the time of "the Catastrophe" (p. 142), a neo-

---

18 Pages 134–150 in the 1964 edition.

Byzantine Plate, had been used by Sissy to entertain her friend Poppy Pantzopoulos long ago. Then it had been offered with a few *kourabiedes* ("biscuits dusted with icing sugar") by the frail old family servant Vangelio. The latter had both caused it to be taken by Sissy at the time of her escape from the Turks, and later in effect had ensured the actual survival of her mistress's friend:

> at the corner of Independence Street the Turk holding the short knife ... And Vangelio the old nurse, ... Vangelio kneeling on the cobbles offered her expression of resigned faith and goodness to the Turk. Her sweet gift of a face wrapped in its white kerchief. To the Turk's amazing knife (p. 149).

Thus the old plate is become a form of mnemonic talisman, a symbol of giving one's life for others and a reminder of how selfish one Greek can be, for the then running Poppy had, it is implied (p. 149), trodden on the faces of others less fortunate.

Yet the focus of memory and conscience, the almost Imperial dish, is not broken by Poppy — as some form of nemesis interpretation might require — but by the awkward and almost invisible husband to Sissy, the down-trodden Sotos Louloudis who might yet occasionally "emerge from the end of the tunnel".[19] The writer's artistic purpose in the account of its breaking is not to remind the hostess of the past, since she appears to have always been aware of the Anatolian tragedy, and declared very early her political and moral concerns, being presented to us as a poet, authoress of:

> ... the epic poem ... On a theme nobody can remember. Which Sissy Kamara declaimed. On a mountainside. To a group of women, most of them by now dead (pp. 135–136).

her other work of conscience being:

> ... the weaving. She organized *Greek Peasant Crafts* (p. 136). And her Anatolian novel had been in the first person: "It is about a flying officer," Sissy confided, "who crashes behind the lines, and is taken prisoner by the Turks" (p. 141).

For Sissy had organised that she "visit the Front. To distribute comforts", at a time when her own mother was wasting her time with "metropolitan Greeks" — persons remarkably like the shallow Basil of modern Sydney, Poppy's vain and foolish husband. As Sissy would observe on the focal occasion of the Australian dinner-party,

---

19 This phrase, suggestive of the Minotaur legend, and not further elaborated on, is used twice of him even as it is found applied to the Greek characters in *The Aunt's Story*.

> We are a brutal, detestable race ... If we care to admit it we are little better than Turk turned back to front ... Admittedly ... there are the active and the passive. But at a certain point, any Greek will bear his breast. It is in the heroic tradition ... but in-grown. Like a toe-nail (p. 143).

Thus it is that the breaking of the plate, which once belonged to Sissy's mother, foregrounds so much for characters, writer and reader. In itself of "ingenious ugliness ... in the shape of a double eagle ringed with snakes of writhing gold" (p. 140), it had yet flirted with both summer light and the scent of jasmine, and been specially wrapped by poor old Vangelio, as her penultimate remembered art. And forty years on, the wretched Sotos, another despised innocent, is made to rake together its fragments already "whitening the terrace" (p. 144), an act which provokes Sissy's hysterical lament over her "lovely eagle":

> "Almost my last possession of importance ... when one had hoped with age to grow less attached" (p. 146).

Then the plate breaking suddenly reminds the muddled and bemused Poppy of that terrible uncovering of Turkish perfidy when, as the foolishly selfish Miss Pesmazoglou, she had run to the Quay

> And Smyrna was burning. The night had drawn its daggers, a playful chiffon of smoke choked... All was running fire and glass. A horse's wet bowels flopped out through the traces and over the paving. A hand hung from the doorway of a tram (p. 149).

The revelation from her sleeping memory, suddenly provoked by the dentist's drill, explains so much of her behaviour, not least why she has for so long "forgotten" these terrible events, filling her childless life with trivia and ever indulging in silly chatter. She is more than aware of her own shallowness, particularly in relation to her friend's strength of character, and to the old nurse's willing art of sacrifice. Yet the breaking of the plate is not the end, for it has served to crystallise that "neo-Byzantine" moment as Poppy's essential self, the young Miss Pesmazoglou, had fled as a refugee through dark streets, smoke and burning. As she tells the bewildered dentist, who refers to the matter of his small account:

> "... I am so glad you trust me! ... But I shall pay you, all the same ... My legs might wobble at the critical moment. They won't of course, but might. One can't be absolutely certain. Not even of oneself" (p. 150).

It is this story of the events of September 1922, more than any other writing by White, which is his moment of truth for modern man's claims to civilisation. Very wisely he makes no mention of the Greeks being then

forced to abandon their political hopes of re-establishing their capital in Constantinople, but is concerned rather with the innocent victims of a tragedy condoned by the Western powers. By exploring the essential characters of two older women of the present — at least one of whom is still reliving that time of horror — he has produced an unforgettable memorial to all the victims of that Turkish massacre of a remembered yesterday.

While there are more subtle Eastern Mediterranean nuances to the intervening texts, the next major exiled Greek or Byzantine strand to his fiction occurs in White's *The Vivisector,*[20] the tale of an artist, Hurtle Duffield, and his quest for understanding of man's destiny and his final reaching out to an elusive God. Now the focus is on Hero Pavloussi,[21] who dominates chapter six of the novel, as the artist's second mistress, somewhat cynically procured for him. She, too, is a Smyrna refugee from "the Catastrophe" (pp. 337–338), in which her aristocratic family who owned a great tsiphliki lost everything but their lives. She had first met her peasant husband to be[22] from a village on Chios during her escape from Anatolia, then moving to Athens, where her sister teaches and she first works in the bank, only to collapse and have to spend a year in a sanatorium (p. 338). The sudden marriage proposal from Cosmos, already a tsiphliki millionaire, is accepted and he is able to complete her healing by taking her to Perialos, an island off the Asia Minor coast, a place of "saints and miracles" (p. 340). It is about this time in her narration of her past that Hurtle senses a "rise" in his own fluctuating faith and so feels that "she must be the pure soul he was longing for" (p. 338). Unable to account for the impact of Perialos, Hero explains the nature of their Smyrna-derived religion by reference to her sister Elly[23] and:

> her faith ... admitting she is a Byzantine. Because, as you see, the faces of the people ... are still so close to the saints. I, on the other hand, cannot admit to faith if God allows the Turks to put out a man's eyes and crucify him[24] on the church door (p. 340).

---

20 London 1970.

21 It is difficult to agree with A. M. McCULLOCH, *A Tragic Vision: The Novels of Patrick White*, St Lucia 1983, p. 72, that White is not at least exploring her life.

22 He seems to be modelled on A. Onassis and is later, p. 373, called the "the Satrap Himself".

23 Modelled like several of the aunts in *The Burnt Ones* (*v. supra*) on Manoly's family.

24 This fate of the Bishop of Smyrna is also referred to on p. 406.

Her further life is a desperate search for sanctification, but, as a pun in the text suggests, she is perhaps already "far too 'burnt' (p. 323), with unguarded eyes full of 'horror'" (p. 328). Hurtle who had once met — and perhaps loved — a Greek woman, Hélène Calvacoressi, in Paris — finds this present woman aesthetically beautiful but inwardly corrupt, first deeming her indeed a "human being", but soon desiring to "tear her breasts apart" (p. 363) in order to probe her innermost being, whereas she had only sought for "mercy", for men to hold to their "moral responsibilities" (p. 359), and for God to be merciful.

As tragedy upon tragedy befalls her and her family,[25] Hero can only cry: "It is nobody's fault ... It is only Fate who arranges it" (p. 371). Like Moraïtis before her she has become "attached" to Australia — and her lover — with a "brown, Byzantine hunger" (p. 371). Yet, despairing at her attempt to exorcise the devils of her adult years by a love relationship with him, and after "a half-intended suicide" (p. 382), she then decides to take Hurtle with her on what could be the only possible cleansing pilgrimage:

> "It is now so long since I have seen the island I have been telling you about — Perialos ... It is this island I wish — I *must* visit again ... I feel the devils may be cast out in the holy places of Perialos" (p. 389).

The actual journey to Greece and then to the island is a tragic one with their hopes soon dashed in the two "neophytes" by the primitive conditions, his lack of faith, and by the squalor of island life, particularly around Theodosios the hermit. This portion of the pilgrimage abounds in strange eschatological images of glory, mingled with bitter satire, and the sophisticated visitors are denied any true solace, despite the fact that

> Greeks, the peasants at least, all seemed to understand whatever there is to know ... Only the rich and the foreigners didn't know ... (pp. 397–398).

While the "landscape" accepts him as artist,[26] her epiphany is centred in her recognition of man as *Dreck*, her essential reverence being stressed, not least in the chapel desecrated by the Turks from Smyrna (p. 406). At this time both the visitors are described symbolically as denied ultimate transfiguration of the Byzantine sort:

---

25 They are driven around Sydney by a chauffeur, Sotiri, whose "name means Saviour" (p. 371). Yet his role is a passive one, due perhaps to his employees' seemingly total loss of faith in this distant land.

26 "He felt ... exalted by the light and colour of the sea-sky" (p. 403).

> They were caught between the purple east, which would never open to them, and the burning west, the blaze of which they mightn't be strong enough to endure (p. 405).

Sadly solace of any sort seems to have been denied to her, and we recall how she had given in to total despair and remember with Hurtle "the richly putrid state of her soul" (p. 401), and what seems to be the Manichaean heresy that the world is not the creation of God, and that matter is not sanctified by Grace.

A final coda to the meaning of Hero's life is given in the candid recollections of the time of World War II, as shared by Duffield with Mothersole on another memory-provoking "sea journey" to Manly. Then the painter stresses Hero's propensity to "self torture", even when "least unhinged" (p. 418), a process brought about by her sense of being "unworthy of her husband-God", and he refers enigmatically to her "unsuccessful exorcism". Her lover reflects too on the dead woman's succumbing to terminal cancer, doubting that it was really "a physical disease" (p. 419) that killed her. What may well be the truest epitaph for poor Hero is to be found in Hurtle's so belated and banal rhetorical question:

> "Isn't love — more, shall we say — a matter of suffering and sacrifice?" (ibid.)

Whatever the meaning of Hero's life it is clear that she had sought a personal redemption ever since her violent separation from the once nurturing Smyrna estate and sure faith. She, and so also her artist lover when in her company, had struggled between the claims of body and spirit, ever seeking the spiritual nestling within the sensual and the human within the transcendental. The landscapes of Smyrna and of Perialos and the embraces of her husband were the core of Hero's spiritual and cultural heritage, and she was ever endeavouring to reach out to buildings, plants, weather and views, creatures and stones, indeed "all that is". Flawed though she may have been, she is presented as a disoriented Byzantine visionary, venerating the lands of her nurture, and lamenting the limitations of her later life's two exiles, in Athens and in Sydney.

The novel *The Twyborn Affair*[27] constitutes an extraordinary variation on both the Byzantium theme and on the novelist's own personal life, for, like White (b. 1912) at the time of its writing, the figure of Eudoxia on the French Riviera in Part I, is living with a Greek gentleman in his sixties, as the first of a series of investigations into his proper place in modern society,

---

27 London 1979.

since he does not know whether he would rather be a man or a woman,[28] or where he, an Australian, should live. The complexity of the interwoven exploration of things Byzantine (and Whitean) is well caught by the protagonist's bemused and self-addressed question, "Why am I besotted on this elderly, dotty, in many ways tiresome Greek?" (p. 23)

The first section of the text concerns Angelos Vatatzes, a retired spice-merchant and refugee from Smyrna (p. 25), and his young "wife", Eudoxia, later revealed to be the fleeing Australian male, Eddie Twyborn. Like Lascaris himself Vatatzes had a puritanical family, a quality enshrined in his wife Anna, "who seems to have set herself up as a professional saint" (p. 25). These several clues in the text may be related to the real Lascaris family with the now available material on the background to White's real life companion. Thus David Marr (p. 214) gives a trenchant and helpful account of this:[29]

> When Byzantium was dismembered by the Fourth Crusade, Theodore Lascaris and his successors became emperors in exile in Nicaea. By the end of the reign of the great John III, Duke Vatatzes, the family held vast territories including most of the old empire up to the edges of the city of Constantinople. But when the empire passed to the boy John IV Lascaris Vatatzes, the throne was usurped by his general, Michael Paleologus, who led the Nicaean forces on the reconquest of Constantinople where the Paleologi[30] reigned for two hundred years until the city was overthrown by the Turks. The Lascaris family survived out of reach ... in France, Sicily and Egypt ...

The Vatatzes of the novel is equally an exile, always fearful of the "marauding Turk" (pp. 31, 98) as befits his own Smyrna antecedents, yet conscious of his ever perceived position in "the Nicaean dynasty, the whole structure of Byzantium" (p. 120). Not so long before the novel commences he had picked up, or been picked up by, the transvestite Eddie Twyborn (p. 124), since which time they have lived together in a heightened intensity of feeling and acceptance by Eddie of his (imagined) new destiny with his lover:

---

28 See N. SHAPIRO'S contention that *T.A.* is "an exploration of sexual, national and human identities", cited on p. 215 of P. WOOLFE, *Laden Choirs*: *The Fiction of Patrick White,* Kentucky 1983.

29 He does not at any point link it with the various clues and hints given in *The Twyborn Affair.* The most helpful printed treatment of this issue is A. P. RIEMER, "Eddie and the Bogomils — Some Observations on *The Twyborn Affair*," *Southerly* 40 (1), 1980, pp. 12–29.

30 Angelos in one of his railings at his fate and the Byzantine destiny comments — in otherwise inexplicable fashion — "I will never hold anything against you ... Not even that gangster Palaiologos" (p. 32).

> that we are wearing the purple, standing on the steps at Blachernae or Nicaea ... (p. 124).

Earlier Eddie/Eudoxia, provoked by the prying Mrs Golson, reveals Vatatzes true complex self-accepted identity:

> He exported spices from Smyrna, from Alexandria. Not all that successfully ... As heir to the Imperial throne he considered himself above commerce. A Byzantine by birth, he's a Byzantiologist by vocation, and an authority on Orthodox theology, which he admits he doesn't yet understand (p. 88).

The references to Paleologi/Palaiologos (p. 32) must imply that at one level Angelos acts out a fantasy that he is John IV (1250–74), son of Theodore II, Emperor 1254–58, and himself the boy emperor from 1258–61. Then, too, the many references to his wife Anna (for example, pp. 25, 36–37, 39) cannot but remind us of Constance (or Anna), 1232–1307, the wife of John III Vatatzes, Emperor 1222–54, and so grandmother of John IV. And the reference to his dominating sister Theodora (p. 95) recall for us John IV's problems with similarly-named younger sister. [See the appended table.]

The composite John III - John IV figure behind Angelos Vatatzes is best caught in Eudoxia's reflecting on his recurring patterns of confused rantings:

> I know that before long the Emperor of All Byzantium (Nicaea thrown in for good measure — Mistra too) will begin to accuse the Colonies ... "Anna my wife, but without the flair of the Empress Eudoxia"[31] ... going off into his usual tumbled Imperial catalogue. "She used to wait on the steps ... along with the Panhyperzevastos ... the Grand Stratopedarch ... the Primikerios the constable of Logothete ..." (p. 32).

And we are brought to the present by the description of the real travails in the life of Angelos — Smyrna, Alexandria, Athens, so well described as "The Stations of the Greek Cross" (p. 33).

Another fascinating aspect of the novel is the series of sly glances at the Bogomils[32] and their essentially Manichaean insistence that the created world is quite separate from God. Seemingly the couple "have been over the Bogomil heresy" (p. 77) many times, and also the Imperial case for persecuting them because of their perversities and sexual licence. Despite his own practice of sodomy Angelos,

---

31 This is, surely, an unrecognised compliment to the present living hetaera.

32 This topic is treated exhaustively by A.P. RIEMER, "Eddie and the Bogomils". This brings out many of the subtleties and parodies in White's treatment of the strange fantasies in the mind of Angelos Vatatzes.

> by contrast, and Orthodoxy, repudiated those who could have been — well, Bogomils, Bulgars — Barbarians (p. 104).

This matter is also linked to the enormous enema[33] left behind by the Vatatzes at "Crimson Cottage" (p. 115) and yearned for by the fugitive Angelos at "My Blue Home" (p. 124).

Without elaborating further on the novel's echoes of and innumerable variations on the Byzantine history over some further 700 years, or on the heir's obsessions with the likely causes of the decline and fall of the Byzantine Empire, it is clear that the whole first part of *The Twyborn Affair* constitutes an extravaganza on many aspects of human sexuality, on Eddie's dualism yet essential purity (p. 381), on his fate as a "pseudo-man-cum-crypto-woman" (p. 298), and on his need to escape from "the domes of Byzantine deception" (p. 175) to the "everyday[34] embroidery of life" (ibid). Eddie, like Angelos, had half-perceived and half invented his daily reality, continually escaping from himself. In these 130 pages a general moral malaise of the (Australian) present had been traced back to 1914 and symbolically to so much of the further history of the Byzantines. Homosexuality, intergenerational sex, cross-dressing, disguises, false masks — all typify Eddie's dilemmas as he arrives "everywhere too early, or too late" (p. 299). They also suggest even more powerfully than in the earlier "Byzantine" texts White's investigation of the individual's psychic and emotional place in modern society. The surrounding world is a false one — Eudoxia and Angelos rented a "pseudo-villa" (p. 21); Eddie was an "outcast-initiate" (p. 194), and a "pseudo-lover"; he moved among the "crypto-rich" (p. 409), and so this crypto-world necessitates that he always present a pseudo-self. Death is a recurring theme and the reference to the Bogomils or to holocaust and apocalypse[35] at the end suggest a final peace for Eddie-Eadith and his mother only in the next world.

Destroying and creating himself and his fictional self in Eudoxia, Eddie and Eadith, White has strangely extended artistic frontiers and our knowledge of the human condition. While the first section of the work, that set in 1914 on the Riviera, may be read as but a phase in the life of the Twyborn boy (born in 1889), it is also a true representation of Byzantine or colonial man's experience of "several lives" (p. 403), "a collage of fantasies" (p. 392), of new spiritual activities, and of the understanding born of pain that:

---

33 RIEMER, p. 13 draws attention to the likely pun of Catars and catharsis: "The Crimson Cottage near St Mayeul is in Cathar country".

34 Here reassurance for the burnt one is found in watching the hen wren, much as Hurtle had found hope in watching the hen on Perialos.

35 Pages 430–432

> true friendship ... comes from the woman in a man and the man in a woman (p. 360).

While White's private life may explain in part his fascination with the Lascarides, he is also able to show us Westerners how "we're near enough to the Near East" (p. 47) and how so many of its people were still "descending out of Asia" (p. 95). Again debunking Athens — "that haven of classicists and German *nouveaux riches*" (p. 95), — White has used the term "Byzantium" to give his readers the full sense of the complexity of modern consciousness, and to underscore the fact that he, if not his reader, is "the stranger of all time".[36]

Perhaps the most difficult, yet playful, and the most satisfying, of White's Byzantine exercises is the 1986 text, *Memoirs of Many in One*,[37] said to be by Alex Xenophon Demirjian Gray, and edited by Patrick White. As the Editor's "Introduction" points out,

> some of the dramatis personae of this Levantine script could be the offspring of my own psyche (p. 16).

And as White himself admitted elsewhere

> [Alex Gray] is myself in my various roles and sexes. It gives me great scope,[38]

and so she/he will tell the reader, the putting of a pen to paper is

> to discover — by writing out — acting out my life — the reason for my presence on earth (p. 157).

And as David Marr has told us so helpfully,

> Alex Gray's forebears and offspring are also fragments of White, and these familiar figures ... are gathered together in the pages of *Memoirs* ... (p. 622).

But it helps if they are disentangled first, the elements of this exuberant yet so serious attempt at self-objectification.

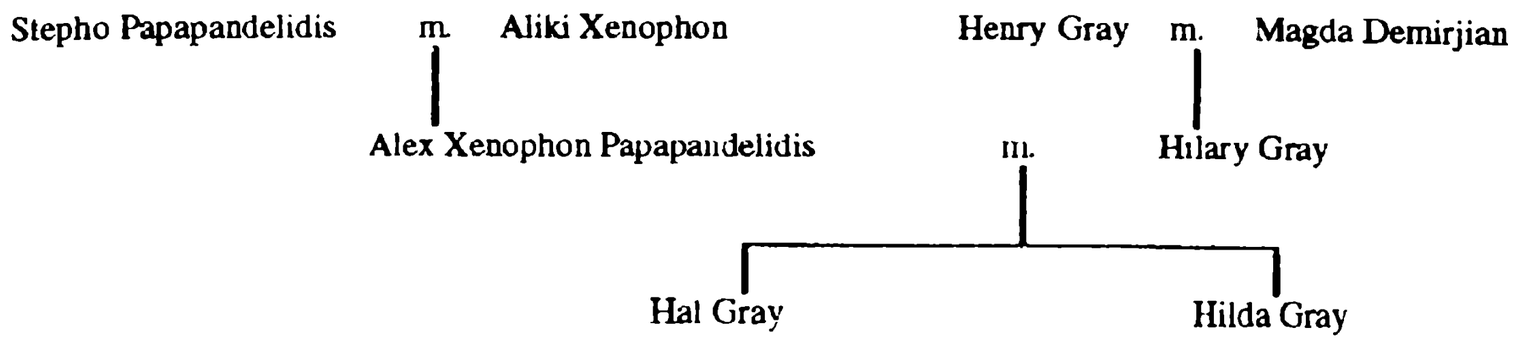
The family tree which is printed at the beginning (p. 7) much assists our clarification of the various *personae*.

---

36 MARR, *Patrick White*, p. 563.

37 An interesting account of the writing of the book — together with manuscript transcriptions and then final published texts — is to be found in S. WOOLFE & K. GRENVILLE, *Making Stories: How Ten Australian Novels were Written*, Sydney 1993, pp. 232–251.

38 P. White to Ronald Waters, a letter of 16. viii. 1984, cited by MARR, pp. 622, 713. In *Memoirs*, the "editor" adds belatedly, p. 179, "her life was mine, historically, personally".



The parents of Alex herself are Stepho and Aliki Papapandelidis, Greeks from Smyrna:

> decent people ... enacting a tragedy, nothing major, but a minor Alexandrian one, on the Corniche, across from the believed site of the Pharos (p. 13).

Himself largely ineffectual and a dedicated bridge player,[39] he is in the shadow of his strong-minded wife, who is described as "an etching scratched remorselessly into copper; [for] she had suffered wars, invasions, revolutions" and, although not a believer, yet found "the smell of an Orthodox church ... consoling" (p. 15). She had rejected the possibility of an exiled life in Australia, finally settling in Athens, and when old had thrown herself into writings on

> Bouboulina,[40] the pirate queen who led the war in the Aegean against the Turk which resulted in her country's independence (p. 16).

The other Smyrna figure of their generation is Magda Demirjian, "a Levantine woman", brought back as an *objet d'art*, by Henry the Australian scholar and 1914–18 serviceman "who wasted his years drifting through the Middle East[41] collecting *object d'art* and rare manuscripts" (p. 10) as well as acquiring Turkish souvenirs from Constantinople. Magda is a hauntingly fascinating woman with "a flair for clothes and jewels, an arresting body, and an aggressive kind of ugliness" (p. 10). Ever a Bohemian and quite outrageously different —

> an Armenian? Arab? Jewess? or whatever ... she did not fit into ... Sydney society ... [but] had done a belly dance on a dinner table at Vaucluse (p. 10).

Despite her provocative beauty, she remained "an untouchable from 'Frango Levantine' Smyrna" (p. 12), "battening" on "wars, invasions, revolutions"

---

39 He parallels White's own father in a general way, as she does the novelist's mother; see p. 27.

40 See pp. 16, 29, 185 and the note on 192.

41 Much later we hear that he had also "snitched ... the pigeon's blood ruby from behind a lattice in Lahore" (p. 163).

(p. 15), returning to Cairo to do "war work" (p. 11) during the Second World War, and called by her daughter-in-law "Magda the Monster"[42] (p. 19).

The further account of her is totally outrageous and even more exotic, as there are proffered various speculations as to her real antecedents —

In Port Said they called her French. Probably Syro-Maltese-Jewish (p. 19), her father having been the station master at Benha, and Syro-Maltese or Armenian-Jewish, and she herself "brought to Egypt by her Diancono aunt after the Catastrophe" (p. 21). She is deemed to live for sex in her return to Egypt, with a male seraglio and a willingness to fellate an army colonel with whom she shares a taxi (p. 33). Her own spirit is then said to possess Alex. Her son Hilary is continually referred to as having "the appearance of a slender, green-complexioned Levantine" (p. 10) and is a masochist who will marry a girl from Smyrna, Alex, and then commit suicide after killing his wife's spaniel Danny, a seeming alter ego of his owner (p. 29).

All these fragmented portraits are but a frame for Alex herself, first and most hauntingly presented as

> a vision of camellia flesh ... tremulous with the emotion waiting to spill[43] (p. 13),

and almost immediately translated to the present, where she is a patient of the psychiatrist, Professor Falkenberg, who is endeavouring to establish the fact of Alex's incest[44] with her Smyrna father, something which the memoirs at least soon admit, as they do that she has been committed to an asylum in the more recent past. From this point we are returned to a roughly chronological account of her life, this provoked by contact with the memory triggering Arachova blanket (p. 24) from the time of her childhood escape from Smyrna, itself another haunting Whitean account of the catastrophe. This is pivoted on the images of the city ablaze, the kindly officer, the smoke, the charitable Mrs Nadya Bogdarly ever befriending refugees and relatives and seen again twenty years on, "her face ... mapped with the rivers of Mesopotamia, Tigris and Euphrates" (p. 32), and the loving nurse, Smaragda (p. 160).

After the period of initial Alexandrian refuge there are other references to her years of nurture, including: her eager identification with Magda's sexual

---

42 Eddie Twyborn calls himself a "monster" in *The Twyborn Affair*, while Theodora Goodman had been identified with the *Monstera deliciosa* (*The Aunt's Story*, p. 232).

43 The parallel here to the early descriptions of Eudoxia in Part I of *The Twyborn Affair* is a very strong one.

44 This and other details may be said to link Alex with Ellen Gluyas of his *A Fringe of Leaves*, 1976.

relationship with the Gauleiter, Herman Goering (pp. 52, 59); a mention of her "service" to Onouphrios, the monk at Ayia Ekaterni; her strange behaviour at the Adolf Hitler Hotel in Washington (pp. 44, 65), and her notion that she has been a cat-goddess (p. 47) — all these experiences seemingly inevitable from her lament that she "hadn't found the frame which fitted me" (p. 49), and so could only hold up her throat for slitting or garrotting (p. 50). At this point of suffering she refers to the "jealous god" and his strange gifts of sexual identity both to her and to Patrick "as part of our complicated, many-faceted lives" (p. 53).

Then comes an account of her/his frenzied search for spiritual enlightenment in the Bible, the Talmud, "the Jewish mystics, the Bhagavad Gita, various Zen masters, and dear old Father Jung" (p. 55). Her child — and seemingly Patrick's, at least spiritually — is then pitied for his crypto-relatives. Yet the reflection that she has never been truly consummated (p. 57) leads to memories of the various periods of her life as an adoring nun — with the "Vampire" nuns of the Sacred Blood; as Cassiani, the nun on Nisos, setting up house with the peasant Abbot Panaretos; and as Sister Benedict of a strange Australian teaching order (for example, pp. 86, 108) with a strong commitment to the farmyard and to organic foods.

All these periods and lives are shot through with other Greek experiences or fantasies — a Prometheus-like exposure on an Aegean rock to some "great predatory bird" (p. 66); life as the "Empress Alexandra of Byzantium and Nicaca"[45] (pp. 67, 68); service in Hera's temple (p. 77): a psyche that remembers a pre-existence in Alexandra, Luxor, or Abu Simbel (p. 78); and the habit of wearing Byzantine "clobber" and rings (pp. 97–98), and, later, "the trappings of Athens, Egypt and Illyria"[46] (p. 126).

At the outset of the book there is a solemn debate (pp. 12–13), set in Alexandria during World War II at the time of Alex's marriage, in which we are told of the plight of individuals who "lose their heads in revolutions and wars", but how no single person can "alter the course of history" or the fact that half the children born in such turmoil are "unwanted". It is clear that it is the purpose of the book to show the emergence of the unloved self[47] in

---

45 Later she gathers up all her territories in the splendid cry of defiance: "I shall remain I — Empress Alexandra of Byzantium Nicaea Smyrna Benha and Sydney Australia," p. 116, see also p. 164. Vatatzes of *The Twyborn Affair* has by him memorabilia of "the three Emperors of Byzantium-Nicaea", p. 28.

46 Arguably this list covers the countries of Shakespeare plays in which she has played leading roles.

47 This is particularly the theme of the related article on *Memoirs of Many in One* by Veronica BRADY, "Glabrous Shaman or Centennial Park's Very

many forms as it attempts, parent-neglected, to determine its own place and lifestyle. Thus Alex/Patrick has looked to mould another soul and to be moulded in turn, to experience the great flights which their temperaments required (p. 66) in the various allotted lives (p. 80) and to escape desolation (p. 115). Fellatio with a black Aboriginal might release a "stream of understanding" (p. 139), or it might even be that "sand, silence and nothingness"[48] constituted "the possible way to something more positive than life" (p. 144). This framework explains to some extent the bizarre patterning of time and history in the *Memoirs*, a carnival of the actual and the imagined, since Alex has long failed to realise what Patrick already knows, "that the key to anybody is in one's self" (p. 64). Masks, mockeries and Byzantine suffering make up her chaotic narrative, discontinuous and yet continually seeking evidence of the possibility of God.

The Alex psyche — joined by either the innocent Sister Bernadette, or is it Manoly himself? — has one of its most illuminating moments in the cold dawn of the morning in the Blue Mountains while they are quite still at early dawn in a lost world:

> we have temporarily abandoned those concepts of vocation, of sanctity, of aspiring to fulfil the wishes of the Holy Spirit (pp. 113–114).

Yet "we" never know the purpose of the "Almighty Poulterer", not even then.

Despite this daunting admission it is proper to see this amazing set of life experiences or dreams, with Tom Shapcott, as

> a celebration of the will to celebrate, to pummel out some necessary space for the wonderful and zany in a wretched and constricting world.[49]

For the "edited" work is digestible, playful, and remarkably assured, as Alex/Patrick uses the Middle Eastern background and Australian life partner to explore the space between the world itself and the ideas which create one's true identity. And poignant indeed are the chaotic sequences as the nondescript Patrick takes the tumultuous Alex for walks in Centennial Park

---

Own Saint? Patrick White's Apocalypse," *Westerly*, no. 3, September 1986, pp. 71–78.

48 This echoes the following 1962 comment by WHITE to John Hetherington on the war experience: "For some of that time in the desert I had a posting in which I was free to wander and I covered a lot of ground. It was then that I began to realize the possibilities of the desert ...." (in J. HETHERINGTON, *Forty-Two Faces*, Melbourne 1962, p. 144).

49 See his review, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 April 1986.

or else endeavours to act as the "archivist" to the plethora of strange documents from "her" past.

The clearest authorial light on White's Byzantine's theme is to be found in his *Flaws in the Glass: A Self-Portrait*[50] in which he refers to his later 1970s travels in Greece and around so many of the Greek islands. These journeys proved to be "disconcerting, not yet completely disillusioning, but deflating experiences" (p. 175) at a time when he was "still in the grip of a passionate love affair" with the idea of Greece. The "enchanted distance" there (p. 176), it is clear, assists that for which the winter "lusts" (p. 177), some harmony of "earth and spirit" (pp. 215, 216), which elusive state satisfies his romantic vision of poor Greece's struggle for independence from the Turk (p. 216). The spiritual plight of Greece is/was particularly caused by international politics, and, strangely, with the "hive ... of Byzantine history" (p. 213).

While it is certainly the case that Patrick White may be added to the list of those more recent Westerners to have been fascinated by the Levant — including Robert Curzon, author of *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant* (1849); Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, author of *The Greek View of Life* (1896); E. M. Forster as in his *Alexandria: A History and a Guide*[51] (1922); the Byzantium poems from W. B. Yeats; Laurence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*, or Maurice Bowra's various essays interpreting Constantine Cavafy — none have been so involved as the Australian novelist has with the meaning of the inherited Byzantine mental climate, notably its tolerance and its eccentricity, to Western eyes. And, similarly, none of the "Western" writers has been so able to identify through a Levantine partner with the Byzantium of his mind, a region filled with religious aberration, squalor and spiritual magnificence.

Put simply, White has made his Smyrna/Byzantium the bridge between his inherited and experienced Europe and modern Australia, in much the same way as the historical Byzantium was either a bridge or a barrier between Islam and Europe. The multi-racial communities there, and generally in the Levant and Eastern Mediterranean, with their vitality and rich culture, have sent some of their most talented if persecuted people to a new land — or even to Western Europe — where they may leaven the lump of the stolid (Anglo-Celtic subjects) or the pseudo-civilised by their colourful vitality, insights into pain, and memories as to how innocent man and woman can suffer

---

50 London 1981.

51 The circumstances leading to the writing of this — namely war-service there by the writer — parallel remarkably White's own initial contacts with the Byzantine lands.

agonisingly. Their lifestyle, with its peculiar tortured quality, has enormous spiritual needs which must be met, or else the lives of all men and women are so much the poorer. They have fled their holocausts, have shown enormous courage and thrown themselves on the compassion of others. They have experienced the hatred that is the lot of all Christians in the modern world and they have acknowledged the political, moral and sexual ambiguities which others would reject in an age and in a southern land that both tempts and defies easy solutions.

White's personal experiences, then, gave him a unique view of the surviving "Byzantine" elements in the lives of strong-minded individuals — and similar fictional figures — in or from the old cities of Greece, Asia Minor and the Delta regions of Egypt, in the latter of which countries there persisted the exotic and dynamic multi-racial urban societies akin to those over which Byzantium had ruled in earlier times. While so many of the cities of the West went into eclipse, even in the Roman empire, the eastern provinces showed themselves far better able to meet the challenges of barbarian invasion, not least because the old Greek city-state had deeper roots in the east, since its traditional craft industries — the manufacture of silverware, of glassware, the weaving of silk cloth — continued to flourish and to maintain the traditional network of trade routes. Similarly the remarkable levels of education, at least for the cosmopolitan middle classes, were largely maintained, as were the Byzantine churches, the cultural traditions and the bonds between monasteries and local people. As always in the east, and especially in the Levant, there was a high level of social mobility, and an absence of rigid social hierarchies. Finally "Byzantium" had still an extraordinary interest in its religions and in all the social and cultural opportunities of a comparatively open state.

Patrick White, convinced of the personal meaning of persecution of the individual, and of the totally negative nature of all anger — whether political, racial, or sexual-moral — has used his "Byzantine" eccentrics and their several fates to show how the impulse to "civilisation", a mask for materialism in our century, has resulted in the condoning of so many atrocities in so many lands. Yet his many "eccentrics" and victims show defiance, truth to their own selves, and a wonderful tolerance so lacking in the conformists-persecutors.

The destruction of Carthage and the great fires of Rome and London ring familiar echoes in the Western consciousness still,[52] but that specific Levantine example of pointless Turkish destruction and the consequent

---

52 This point is made by HOUSEPIAN, *Smyrna 1922*, p. 235.

diaspora of the wretched survivors had perhaps only been remembered in the old Byzantine lands until Manoly Lascaris had brought it to the notice of the already Byzantine sensibility of Patrick White. That liquidation of minorities, or alternative lifestyles, and even of individual anguish in the face of political moves towards homogeneity, were the purpose of all too many "statesmen" and moralists in the decades following 1918. Yet such uncomprehending callousness is ubiquitous in our deemed-to-be-enlightened age, as for example is all too evident in Cambodia or Bosnia of the early 1990s.

As White's several stories make clear, the survivors of the specific 1922 wrack of civilisation owed their further existence to both selfless compassion in others and desperate personal courage. They and their fates became one of the great moral themes of integrity for the Nobel Laureate to-be, a challenge to the conscience of all Australians, both his contemporaries and all those who follow them, as was so well said by Peter Skrzynecki, in his contribution to *Patrick White: A Tribute*[53] that such Whitean things speak with

> UNEXPECTED HONESTY —
> reveal quite moral preoccupations
> and a common link
> with the rest of humanity.

In 1925 Yeats had written in *A Vision:*

> ... if I could be given a month of Antiquity ... I would spend it in Byzantium a little before Justinian opened St. Sophia ... [there] maybe never before or since ... religious, aesthetic, and practical life were one ...

Patrick White spent almost fifty years of his life thinking about the eternal "Byzantium". Like Yeats he loved the region for its pain, its freedom from xenophobia and ability to welcome "the stranger", its acceptance of a cosmic unity beyond all notions of evil, and the fact that it had remained a world of the spirit. Despite all the political tragedy, the corruption of the many island monasteries, and the squalor in later times of Athens itself, the Levant generally offered the later writer a place of peace, to which he felt himself guided, a haven "chosen for me",[54] like so much else in his life. Bisexuality

---

53 Compiled by Clayton JOYCE, Sydney 1991, at p. 120.

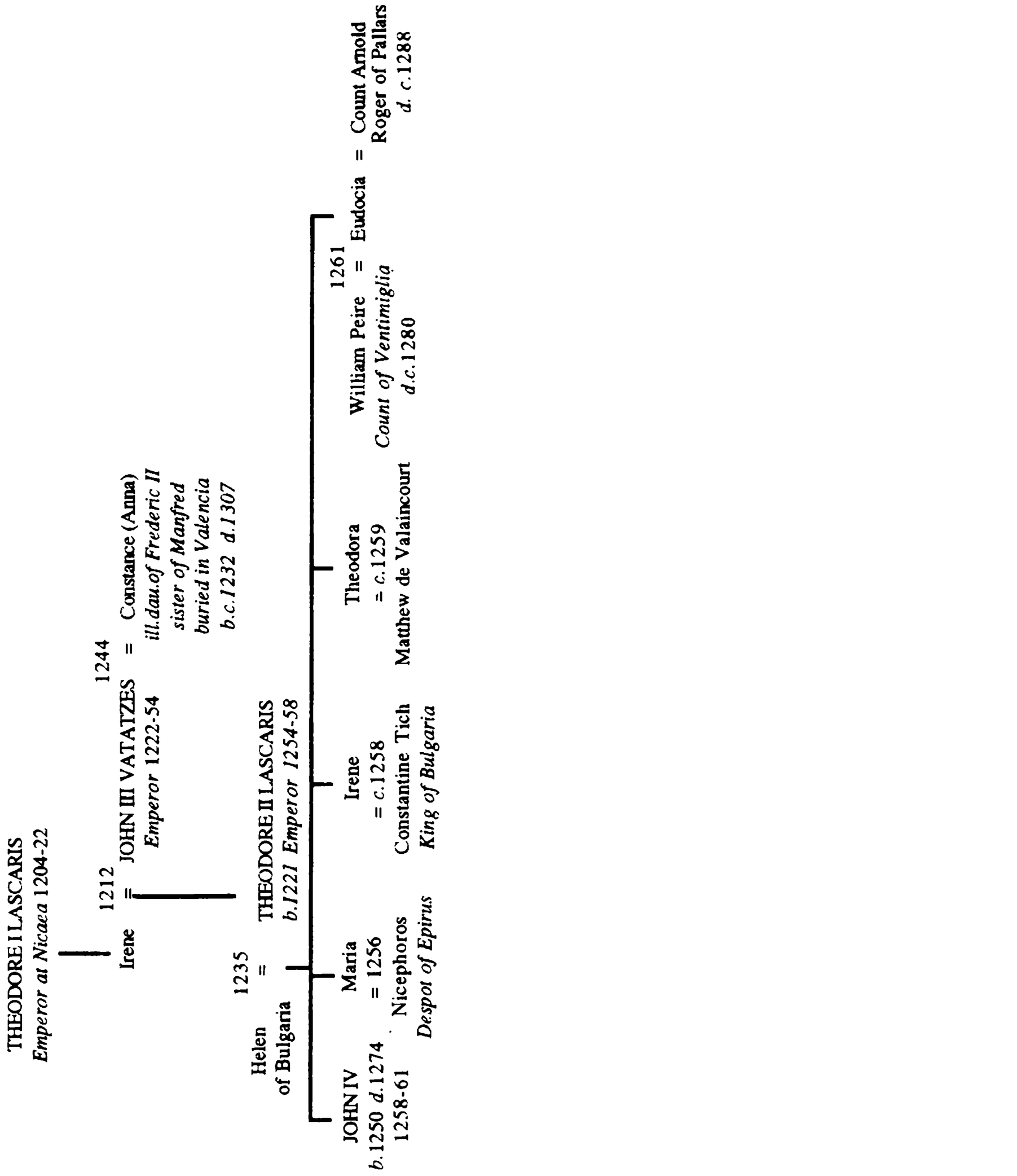
54 *Flaws in the Glass*, p. 215. A.P. RIEMER comments relevantly on the help of "Egypt" in defining various limited Australian personalities in WHITE'S *The Cocatoos*, London 1974, a second collection of novellas and short

and guilt, and the redemptive power of love came into final peace as this seemingly eccentric artist — Australia and Britain forgotten — journeyed ever more fruitfully into his Byzantine interior, a divine landscape to put alongside Virgil's Latium, or John Bunyan's Bedfordshire. For all were great writers who can take us to places of revelation, of providence and pain. All three came to perceive the apocalyptic meaning of a long history of destruction, slow and insidiously corrosive in the years of peace, and fiercely traumatic during the time of war. All responded to "landscape" through the power of their imagination and were thereby released from temporal and societal imprisonment to respond to the glory of God rather than to the cynical and pragmatic dictates of a contemporary reason.

---

stories. See his "Landscapes with Figures — Images of Australia in Patrick WHITE'S Fiction," *Southerly* 42 (1), 1982, pp. 20–38, and especially 33.

Outline Pedigree of the Lascarides



BUILDING ON THE CLASSICAL PAST: 1

RETROFIT ECCLESIA: A NON-CONFORMING BUILDING TYPE

Michael Milojevic / University of Auckland

Among the broad range of architectural conversions which transformed the conceptual and physical nature of the Mediterranean cities of late Antiquity, one of the most significant catalysts was the conversion of pagan temples for re-use as Christian *ecclesiae*.[1] Indeed the continuity of sacred sites across cultural eras — which Richard Krautheimer has described a *lois des lieux* — is not uncommon and can result in a visually dramatic juxtaposition of architectural intentions [pl. 1]. This paper presents the architecture of transformation as a mainstream architectural activity, historically and architecturally as significant as that work *de novo* — those buildings which we have for so long described as "the monuments" of the development or evolution of architectural ideas. The proto-Byzantine temple-churches, as I shall call them, are indeed non-conforming building types in the sense that

---

1 The Christianisation of sacred buildings in late antiquity can be seen as a critical aspect of the accelerated transformation of the physical character of the cities of the Mediterranean basin from the fourth through the seventh centuries and to some extent beyond. Since F.W. DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche Kirchen in antiken Heiligtumern," *JDAI* 54, 1939, pp. 105–136, and "Christianisierung der Monumente," [art] *RAC* II cc. 1228–1241, there have been no broad architectural/archaeological surveys of the subject of temple to church conversions until J. VAES, "Christliche Wiederverwendung antiker Bauten: Ein Forschungsberichte," *Ancient Society* 15–17, 1984–1986, pp. 305–367 and Abb. 2 – Abb. 81, although the survey of D. CLAUDE, *Die byzantinische Stadt im 6. Jahrhundert (= Byzantinische Archiv)* Suppl. 13, 1969, subsumed the subject of the temple-churches (esp. 69 ff). Regional studies for Greece have been the most influential publications on the subject with respect to dating and historical circumstances of conversion, for which see J.-M. SPIESER, "La christianisation des sanctuaires païens en Grèce," *Neue Forschungen in griechischen Heiligtumern* (1974), Athens 1976, pp. 309–320, and A. FRANTZ, "From Paganism to Christianity in the Temples of Athens," *DOP* 19, 1965, pp. 187–205. For a mention of the temple-churches within their urban/rural contexts, see C. MANGO, *Byzantine Architecture,* New York 1976, esp. 30–57 (Ch. 3: "Cities of the Early Byzantine Period"); idem, *Byzantium the Empire of New Rome*, pp. 60–87 (Ch. 3: "The Disappearance and Revival of Cities").

civic authorities from Antiquity to the present day have defined buildings which have been physically reconfigured for a "change of occupancy".[2]

Unfortunately what we know of the historical circumstances from texts does not coincide with the archaeological evidence, and so what follows, like previous considerations of this phenomenon, has two distinct kinds of evidence and so two modes of presentation.

Epigraphic evidence for North Africa in particular has found that the upkeep of temples by pagan communities was not an uncommon phenomenon even late in the fourth and early in the fifth centuries[3] and yet, officially this practice was banned by Constantine II in 356 when he legislated the closure of the pagan cults and the protection of the *temenoi* from Christian encroachment.

The last rescript in the Codex Theodosianus pertaining to the uses of the temples as imperial *patrimonium* dates to 435; it was the third of its kind. We may thus presume that both the continued operation of some temples through this period and the Christian misappropriation of others presented a problem.[4] Contemporary sources tell us that as often as not it was the bishops and monks who led the congregating laity into defacing and pilfering the sites, appropriating materials from them, but most significantly, re-occupying the *temenoi* without seeking proper authorisation.[5] There is, in the proto-Byzantine record, not more than a score of references made specifically to the *aedes sacra* as the object of sectarian dispute and imperial involvement. Two literary sources from the end of the fourth and early fifth centuries, one pagan and one Christian, will have to suffice as samples of the concerns and values which pagans and Christians conveyed about the temple structures as objects and symbols.

---

2 "Non-conforming building type" is a building code term in current usage defining a building which was condoned under now defunct building and/or zoning regulations; the implication of the term being that if the structure is abandoned for a certain period (i.e., 90 days) or a greater part of it (i.e., 60%) is destroyed by fire the previous occupancy is void. A certain fairness is the principle here even if the intentions of the civic/regional authorities has changed radically. The themes of expiration of use or destruction were and remain the operative notions.

3 Cl. LEPELLEY, *Les cites de l'Afrique romaines au Bas-Empire*, I, Paris 1979, esp. pp. 59–90 (ch. 2: "Les constructions et restaurations de batiments publics urbains et les variations de la conjoncture dans le temps").

4 C. PHARR, *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions*, Princeton 1952.

5 G. FOWDEN, "Bishops and Temples," *JThS* ns 29/1, 1978, pp. 53–78.

Libanius, the pagan Antiochean *honoratus*, in his "open letter" of 386 entitled *Pro templis*,[6] seems almost certainly to have been responding, in the urgency of the moment, to the excessive religious intolerance and illegal activity of the infamous Cynegius, *praefectus praetorio orientis* of 384–388.[7] For this reason Libanius was most concerned to be open-minded about the fate of "our ... shrines that have been erected with so much toil and time, labour and expense. If we must protect our cities everywhere, if our cities owe their fame to the temples in particular, and if these temples are, after the glories of the palace, their chief pride, we must surely give them some consideration and be zealous for their maintenance as part of the fabric of cities. They are at least buildings, even though not used as temples".[8]

Libanius suggests: "Taxation presumably requires offices of collection: so let the temple stand and be the collecting office, and keep it from demolition. Do not let us think it a crime to cut off a man's hand when we credit those who gouge out the eyes of cities."[9]

Normally an eloquent defender of the fullness and the purity of pagan ritual, Libanius is caught here in a particularly conciliatory moment. Some have wondered whether he did not in fact influence the legislation brought down by his emperor, Theodosius. Elsewhere Libanius mentions the secular re-use of three Antiochean temples, or at least parts of them.[10]

Our most revealing source concerned directly with the subject of the translation of a pagan *temenos* to Christian church is the *Vita Porphyrii* written by Mark the Deacon, an early fifth century follower of Porphyrius bishop of Gaza, relating an episode which began in 398, a dozen years after the composition of *Pro templis*. It appears that Mark, the Gazan deacon, travelled to Constantinople to secure an imperial directive from the empress suppressing the cult activities of the pagans of Gaza. Hilarius, *magister officiorum*, was expected to enforce this directive but it seems that his influence could not be brought to bear upon the venerable *temenos* of the

---

6 LIBANIUS, trans. A.F. NORMAN, *Libanius II Selected Works*, Cambridge Mass. & London 1977, pp. 91–151, esp. Oration 30: "To the Emperor Theodosius, For the Temples" (*Pro templis*).

7 FOWDEN, "Bishops," pp. 62–64, based on the observations of Dr. J.F. Mathews.

8 LIBANIUS, *Pro templis*, 42, p. 139.

9 Loc. cit.

10 LIBANIUS, in reference to Antioch, reports the reuse of the museum as a school (c. 354–362; *Oratio* I, 102), the street colonnade of the Dionyseum as a temporary *aula consularis* (c. 386; *Oratio* V, 26) and an Atheneum as a barrister's hall (c. 388; *Epistle* 87). I would like to thank Dr. Garth Fowden for alerting me to these references.

tutelary civic deity, the Marneion. Two years later, in 400, it took a sojourn to Constantinople by Bishop Porphyrius himself to make a case with the empress for the full social and religious status of the Gazan Christians. This seems to have been a complete success and the transference of pagan property into ecclesiastical hands was marked on 4 May 403 by the consecration of the cathedral known otherwise as the Eudoxiana.

The *Vita Porphyrii* contains the single most important passage outlining the deliberations and eventualities of the transformation of a *temenos* for the use of a Christian community, in this case, the accommodation of the cathedral of Gaza on the site of the ancient Marneion, which may itself have been sited atop the ancient and sacred tell:

> After the Marneion had been completely burnt down and the city had been pacified, the blessed Bishop [Porphyrius] together with the holy clergy and the Christian people determined to build a church on the burnt site in accordance with the revelation he had had while he was in Constantinople: it was for this purpose that he received money from the most pious Eudoxia ... Some persons urged that it should be built on the plan of the burnt temple ... Some persons then said that the holy church should be built according to this plan, while others contradicted them saying that the very memory of such plan ought to be blotted out ... When the ashes had been dug out and all the abomination removed, the holy Bishop ordered that the remaining debris from the marble revetment of the Marneion, these, they said, were sacred and pertained to a place into which access was forbidden, especially to women would be used for paving the open space in front of the church so that they might be trodden on not only by men, but also by women, and dogs, and pigs, and cattle...[11]

Unfortunately we do not know the physical condition of the Marneion in the second half of the fourth century and neither are we aware of the date when the pagan cults closed down. Nevertheless this is the most detailed account we have for the Christianisation of a pagan *temenos*, and it corroborates the *Codex Theodosianus*. By way of contrast, a scenario recounted by Theodoret (*Historia Ecclesiastica)*, in which Marcellus, the Bishop of Apamea-on-the-Orontes, was murdered while overseeing the demolition of a Zeus *temenos*, suggests that the bishop had the active and legitimate support of the army and this, surprisingly, predates the Codex Theodosianus.[12] This same source tells us that sprinkled holy water, signs

---

11 Marcus DIACONUS, *Vita Porphyrii*, 75–77, in C. MANGO, *Art of the Byzantine Era 312–1453, Sources and Documents*, Englewood Cliffs 1972.

12 THEODORET, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, V, 21, 1, 5–15 (PG 82). For a discussion of the degree of imperial sanction and the spirit in which it was

of the cross, and a cleansing inflagration forced the daemons out of the stones of the *temenos*.

A passage in the *Vita San Gregorio*, a section of the *Liber Pontificalis* dated to 590–604, tells us that boars, turnips or perhaps rape were used in the exorcism of a temple, probably in 596, in order to allow for the consecration of Bishop Gregorios's church, in an uncommonly well-preserved Hellenistic "Temple of Concord" (probably dedicated to the Dioscurides) on the Agrigento acropolis.[13]

It must be emphasised that we have no corroboratory archaeological evidence for violent destruction by fire or dismantling; neither can we confirm a scenario of direct implantation of Christian activity for pagan such as claimed by some contemporary sources. We must assume that the scenario of use-abandonment-reuse is most common.[14]

Closure and abandonment for lack of interest or resources, or the uninhabitability of the *cella* and site because of natural dilapidation or natural catastrophe (earthquake or fire) seems to have been the rule, and closure and abandonment because of Christian intimidation and Christian destruction very much the exception. It is folly to presume, even at Gaza or Agrigentum which is, for example, still (without reconstruction work in the meantime) structurally intact, the temples were active pagan cult sites in fine condition.

Sampling the physical evidence, a corpus of some three hundred conversion scenarios can be compiled,[15] the majority of which describe the re-occupation of a pagan *temenos* after the substantial destruction of the pre-existing pagan architectural setting. Of some eighty-three instances of the

---

interpreted see FOWDEN, "Bishops," pp. 60, 64–67, and for the comparable activities of Porphyry of Gaza, 72–75.

13 Vita San Gregorio, *Liber Pontificalis*.

14 It is undeniably difficult to judge archaeologically between accidental fire and arson, though more possible to make distinctions, though only conjectural, between structural collapse due to earthquake and demolition or contrived destruction by labourers and zealots.

15 This corpus is one of the subjects of my doctoral dissertation (in progress), Department of Architecture, University of Cambridge. The corpus is organised according to the architectural conditions of the transformation, i.e., A) Cellae: Ecclesiae within Substantial Temple Building Fabric; B) Temenos: Ecclesiae in the Temenos (not in A or atop C); C) Foundation: Ecclesiae atop Temple Sites; D) Associated: Ecclesiae in the General Vicinity of Temples or Temple Sites; E) Coemeterial: Ecclesiae located within; F) Secular Public Space: Ecclesiae located within previously; G) Domus: Ecclesiae located within/atop.

conversion of *cellae*[16] it is useful to make distinctions regarding the Christianisation of pagan *temenoi* from a formal and compositional point of view. This means basically one of two things: the re-use of the *cella* as an integral part of the new project (generally by a liturgical re-organisation with or without demolition and addition) or the re-organisation of the *temenos* abandoning the *cella* itself but establishing an *ecclesia* intramurally. This brief overview consists of eight scenarios of each of these conditions of transformation: for *cella* conversions, two each from Greece, Sicily, Asia Minor and North Africa; for the establishment of an *ecclesia* in the *temenos* (specifically not incorporating the *cella*) another eight cases, three from Egypt, and the rest from Asia Minor, Syria and North Africa.[17]

First the Christianisation of the Graeco-Roman peripteral and prostyle temple as a typological sub-group: Stuart and Revett's mid-eighteenth century record of Athens describes the vicissitudes of classical sites including the Christianisation of the Temple of Artemis Agrotera at Eleusis [pl. 2];[18] Texier and Pullan's work records the forum temple at Vienne, France, in its

---

16 I mean to be both specific with respect to all *cellae* types be they Graeco-Roman roofed spaces, hypaethral courts, hypostyle ante-chambers of large complexes or small inner *sancta* of courtyard temples (*temple a cour*) but to deal generally with which part of the temple or ecclesia is used for what purpose, that is even if ancillary Christian functions are sited into more sacred locations in the pagan plan or include all spaces which are.

17 From a corpus of forty-nine scenarios of which I am aware I have to offer here a diverse sample of sixteen sites meant to cover not only building types and regions but also transformational intentions on an architectural level: thus temples both large and relatively small, roofed and hypaethral, pre-Classical and Classical, with an equally diverse set of ecclesiastical adaptations installed in them just as often reversing, shifting, reducing orientations, access and scale as maintaining the architectural shell. There is also a range of building ages at the time of conversion from, say, the third century courtyard temple at Sbeitla which was perhaps a century to one hundred and fifty years old to the temple at Abydos which was about seventeen hundred years old at the time of conversion. The plans, figures 1–10, are properly oriented and on a 10 metre grid, and all to the same scale of 1:333. Figures 6–7 are reproduced here at half that scale, 1:666; figures 1–5, 8–10 are reproduced by half that scale again. This odd scale was chosen in order that neither detail nor scale be compromised to facilitate description, comprehension and comparability with sites both modest and vast. The credit for these drawings goes entirely to Robin Byron.

18 Ch.M. TEXIER & R.P. PULLAN, *Byzantine Architecture: illustrated by examples of edifices erected in the East during the earliest ages of Christianity with historical and archaeological description*, London 1864.

nineteenth century Neo-Classical ecclesiastical condition [pl. 3].[19] These appear to describe the late Antique and proto-Byzantine walling-up of intercolumniations, reversal of orientation and organisation of spaces more suited to Christian liturgy.

The remarkable state of preservation of some temples, for example, the Dioscurides at Agrigentum, Sicily,[20] and the Hephaisteion, Athens,[21] attest to the effect that such work had in preserving the ancient fabric. Consider the plans of such *temenoi* as again, Agrigentum (probably dating to 596) [fig. 1] and the temple of Athena Parthenos, Athens (between 431 and 595) [fig. 2]. The Agrigentum temple-church is organised on the east half of the pagan stylobate leaving most of the structure apparently unchanged.[22] Here, and

---

19 J. STUART & N. REVETT, *The Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated by J.S. and N.R.*, London 1762–1816.

20 This site, commonly known as that of the Temple of Concord, was probably dedicated c. 460–430 B.C. to the Dioscuri and perhaps rededicated c. A.D. 596 (Vita San Gregorii Leont. in the *Liber Pontificalis*, PG 98, esp. 709) as the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, most commonly known as "the church of Bishop Gregorios" and subsequently as San Gregorio delle Rape. It is one of two or perhaps three temple-churches on the Agrigentine acropolis in the proto-Byzantine period. In any case the temple of Demeter was rededicated and has been known more recently as San Biagio. See L. TRIZZINO, "La basilica bizantina di S. Gregorio agrigentino nel tempio della Concordia," *Rassegna*, 1954, pp. 172–188.

21 The Hephaisteion, on a hillock overlooking the Athenian agora, dedicated c. 450–400 B.C., appears to have been rededicated as the church of Saint George either in the fourth quarter of the fifth century or the seventh century. Without going into a long description it should be said that a barrel vault was inserted over both the pronaos and naos by removing the inner crosswall, the columnar screen and the central part of the west portico wall in order to accommodate the polygonal apse without much affecting the structure's outward appearance. Christian burials were found about the Christianised structure; three were cut into the stylobate in the west range of the peristasis. See DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 131 no. 75 and Abb. 15; J. TRAVLOS, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens*, London 1971, pp. 261–273 and fig. 335; SPIESER, "La christianisation," pp. 309–320; FRANTZ, "Temples of Athens," pp. 187–205.

22 The Temple of Athena Parthenos on the Athenian acropolis, originally dedicated 465 B.C., appears to have been transformed into "the church of Saint Michael" by cutting three doorways into the crosswall between the naos and opisthodomos, and building a polygonal apse into the depth of the eastern range of the peristasis. See SPIESER, "La christianisation," p. 310; FRANTZ, "Twilight," pp. 187–205; DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 131 no. 74, as well as the first modern report on this transformation, F.W. DEICHMANN, "Die Basilike in Parthenon," *AM* 63/64, 1938/39, pp. 127–139.

even more so in the Parthenon, it seems that the original exterior aspect remained essentially intact. The insertion of an apse into the wall fabric and into the adjacent east portico, the opening up of a longer axial-spatial progression and the general enlargement of the interior are the salient features of Christianisation.[23]

It was probably in the seventh century that a bishop Zosimus initiated the conversion of the Athena *temenos* in Siracusa, Sicily [fig. 3]; here the work undertaken to create a three-aisled plan was substantial, entailing as it did the walling-up of the *peribolos* intercolumniations, the cutting of arcades and clerestories in the massive *cella* walls, and the demolition of the intervening walls of the *opisthodomos*, *pronaos* and *naos*.[24] This temple-church is the only site which has remained functional to the present [pl. 4]. The original liturgical arrangements and facade condition has been obscured by subsequent renovations but if the apse was originally established off the pagan stylobate (an interesting symbolic gesture in itself), it would approximate the square apse addition to the *cella* of the converted temple of Divinised Augustus and Livia, Ancyra (Ankara, Turkey; dated to the second half of the fifth century or later).[25] Evidently the *peribolos* columns, themselves the main feature of a Trajanic renovation had already been removed [fig. 4]; considering some contemporary sources from Mopsuestia in Cilicia where rival pagan and

---

23 It must be remembered, of course, that in the early Christian era there was an essential change in the occupancy of the interior spaces in question as now these interiors became congregational spaces rather than the space around the peribolos and, especially, in front of the portico and stylobate.

24 P. ORSI, "Gli scavi intorno all'Athenaion di Siracusa negli anni 1912–1917," *Monumenti antichi pubbl. dall'Accademia dei Lincei* 25, 1919, 353ff.; DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 135 no. 82 and Abb. 19.

25 The site of a temple, church and mosque, the temple, rededicated c. A.D. 100, as the Sebasteion or the Temple of Divinised Augustus and Livia, underwent a series of classicisations by the addition of a set of peribolos columns about the prostyle (or amphiprostyle?) original structure. What appears as the final Christian arrangement suggests that the plan was reversed (cf. the temple of Athena Parthenos above) re-using the original cella door *in situ* and substantially lengthening the internal proportion to approximate 1:3 by the addition of an alternating red and white course (neo-Constantinopolitan?) basalt ashlar construction. It is uncertain whether this work is contemporary with the cutting of three windows high into the original cella walls and the Christian crosses incised into the walls. See TEXIER & PULLAN, *Byzantine Architecture*; D. KRENCKER & M. SCHEDE, *Der Tempel von Ankara*, Denkmaler Antiker Architecktur, III, Berlin-Leipzig 1936, esp. pp. 32–34 and Abb. 40–43 "Umbau des Tempels zur Kirche"; DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 128 no. 56; S. MITCHELL, s.v. "Ancyra," *PECS* pp. 54–55.

Christian congregations each claimed, returned and re-claimed again a set of *peribolos* columns, we might even imagine some such scenario here.

The reorganisation of the ancient Aphrodite *temenos* at Aphrodisias in Carian Asia Minor (Geyre, Turkey) [fig. 5] involved the substantial enlargement of the *temenos* by the demolition of the entire wall fabric within the *peribolos*; the shifting of the front and back portico columns in order to extend the colonnades to the west and east, and their enclosure as aisle colonnades within a larger basilica, was preceded by narthecies and a slightly off-axis atrium.[26] One might see this conversion as a literal turning-inside-out of the architecture; certainly a most costly and time-consuming undertaking but destined to have a far longer life as the cathedral of Stauropolis (?), "the city of the cross", as Aphrodisias may have been re-named in the proto-Byzantine era, than as an Aphrodite *temenos*.

The Christianisation of the tripartite Puno-Roman courtyard temples, with their sequence of street portico, peristyle atrium and small square *cella* placed axially, resulted in a distinct Christian architecture. The courtyard temple-church known as the basilica of Servus at Sufetula, Africa Proconsularis (Sbeitla, Tunisia) [fig. 6], may have been the Orthodox cathedral converted for use at the end of the fourth or early fifth centuries; the *temenos* dated to the third century is of an unknown dedication. Here most of the *temenos* perimeter wall was retained, though in the eastern angle a section was removed in order to organise a corridor, vestibule and chapel from a new entrance off the north angle of the site. A five-aisle basilica was organised transversally within the originally unpaved atrium giving the presbyterium a north-west orientation. The colonnades of the paved peristyle porticos were replaced by walls and so there was a reversal of the figure-ground relationship at least with respect to the south-eastern and south-western ranges. A prominent aspect of the conversion is the installation of a

---

26 While there is no clear dating evidence for this site, originally an Anatolian cult site, and the site of two Graeco-Roman *temenoi*, the Hadrianic Temple of Venus Aphrodite has long been established as a temple-church primarily because of extant apse/synthronon frescoes of a comparatively late date in the cathedral's history. See R. CHANDLER, N. REVETT & W. PARS, *The Antiquities of Ionia*, III, London 1812, esp. p. 68; DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 128 no. 57; R. CORMACK, "The Byzantinization of Aphrodisias," *AABSC* 5, Washington DC., 1981, pp. 13–14; K.T. ERIM, in *AS* from the early 1960s to the present, but esp. "Excavations at Aphrodisias in Caria," *AJA* 66, 1962, p. 196, and, for generalised images, KERIM, *Aphrodisias, City of Venus Aphrodite*, London 1986.

baptistery into the space of the pagan *cella*; in its Christianised form these columns may or may not have remained in situ.[27]

The "temple of Ceres"-church at Thuburbo Majus, Africa Proconsularis (near El Fahs, Tunisia) [fig. 7],[28] is the only other comparable site, though distinctive too in its careful rearrangement. The Sufetulan conversion resulted in the idiosyncratic north-western orientation of all the churches in that city's plan. At Thuburbo the south-western pagan orientation was reversed, the main central doorway of temple's portico was blocked as was the corresponding *cella* door and the peristyle was exactly bisected by the north wall of a three-aisled basilica. The ecclesia was formed into the south half of the peristyle re-using the colonnade in situ, and apparently as straightforwardly as possible. Two new doors were cut into the back wall of the street portico and an apse was appended to it. New doors were cut into the south wall of the small square *cella*, now baptistery, reached from a new space through two doors cut from the south-west wall of the peristyle colonnade.

Finally with respect to the insertion of *ecclesiae* into *temenoi* but avoiding the *cella* one can identify cultural continuity if not the continuity of cult spaces themselves. Let us consider examples of both those adapted to the existing architectural spaces as well as some built *de novo* into pagan *temenoi* in such a way as to retain, even preserve, the site.

In the plans of the well-preserved Nubian Ptolemaic temple complex at Tentyra, Thebais Secunda (Tell Edfou, Egypt) [fig. 8][29] and the Dynastic

---

27 Basilica III (Basilicas I and II may have been elements of a Donatist ecclesiastical complex), or the "basilica of Servus" on the *decumanus maximus*, has been reconstructed without reference to details of the sanctuary or the contre-apse arrangements rendered unrecoverable by previous radical cleaning of the site. See N. DUVAL, "Église et temple en afrique du nord," *Bull. archeol. du Comm. des Trav. hist. et scient.*, nouv. ser., fasc. 7, année 1971, Paris 1973, pp. 265–296, esp. 268ff.

28 See DUVAL, "Église," esp. pp. 277–290.

29 The second century B.C. temple of Horus at Ptolemaic Toreret (Coptic ATBO or TNTOPE) was a completely new development on a VIth Dynasty Old Kingdom site which had taken much building attention in the meantime; the Christian mark on the site's architecture is minimal, consequently almost invisible in plan, surely one of the clearest instances of the continuity of operation in its architectural setting. See A. BADAWY, *Coptic Art and Archaeology: The Art of the Christian Egyptians from the Late Antique to the Middle Ages*, Cambridge Mass. 1978, pp. 29 and 64ff.; for the large Coptic basilica lodged between the enceinte of the Horus temple and the Roman mamissi which has gained most of the attention at this locale partially because it is the earliest dated (A.D. 559–574) Nubian church:

Egyptian sanctuary and "Slaughtering hall complex" at Abydos, Thebais Secunda (El'Araba el-Madfuna, Egypt) [fig. 9],[30] one can only localise the placement (for there are scant architectural remains), of three early Coptic churches established transversally in two hypostyle halls and a courtyard. Clearly the spaces which were basilical to begin with were identified as appropriate places and apses were built between the eastern-most columns as a rule; by blocking-up only one threshold, it was usually possible to shut-off the pagan sanctuaries themselves. There are a number of Egyptian scenarios of the insertion of an *ecclesia* into the vast courts of the temple complexes such as in the Ramasseum at Medinet Habu.[31] It should be said that the

---

DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 123 no. 36; F. DUMAS, Cairo 1969, esp. pp. 6–11 and 93–94 + Addenda, 10 n. 1; idem, "Dendara" [art.] *LA* I (1975), cc. 1060–1063.

30 The contiguous "Slaughtering hall complex" as a wing to a New Kingdom (c. 1312 B.C.) mortuary temple, in this case of Sethos I but completed by his sucessor Ramesses II, is a completely unique scenario. There is Tiberian and Hadrianic evidence for building work and occupation (by an Imperial garrison) in the temple complex as a whole. Because the "slaughtering hall complex" was not the sanctuary (in fact sanctuaries: seven parallel chapels) and because it had an integral open-air courtyard it may have seemed appropriate for re-use (in its entirety) as a complex of ecclesiastical functions, perhaps a convent. Early Coptic graffiti, the defacing of ancient reliefs, the cutting of niches and receptacles in the ashlars and the construction of an apse blocking a doorway in the north-east wall of the Osireion hypostyle hall, strongly suggests the installation of a church here; similar evidence is found in the court itself. See E. NAVILE, *Details releves dans les ruins de quelques temples égyptiens*, Egypt Exploration Fund, Paris 1930, see esp. "I Abydos" the south area; E. AMELINEAU, "Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne du IVe et Ve siècle," *MMAF* IV (1886), pp. 66 and 299–300, for the earliest report and notice of the then extant but now vanished supposed image of the first Anba Mousa (thought to have been a contemporary of Patriarch Theodosius, 536–540); A. PIANKOFF, "The Osireion of Seti at Abydos during the Greco-Roman Period and the Christian Occupation," *Bull. Copte* 15, 1960, pp. 125–149, esp. 131; B. KEMP, "Abydos" [art.] *LA* I, 1975, esp. cc. 39–41.

31 The twelfth century B.C. second Osiride court of this vast valley temple of Ramesses III was Christianised by the removing of the inappropriate and offending monumental figures, the walling up of "peristyle" intercolumniations, the construction of an apse, the raising of the court level such that the laying down of four ranges of columns created a massive five aisled basilica, and the cutting of inscriptions which identify this as the "church of Saint Athanasius". The mid-fifth century Coptic context of this transformational work, the city of Jeme, was of a dense urban character hard up against the ancient walls. See U. Monneret de VILLARD, *Les couvents pres de Sohag*, Milan 1926, Abb. 57 and pl. 32–33, 33b;

extent of pre-Islamic Coptic occupation of the ancient temples of Egypt and Nubia seems to have been almost complete; indeed one is hard-pressed to find sites without some such evidence.

For Christian insertions within hypaethral *naoi* and *temenoi* courtyards consider the huge churches excavated by Theodor Wiegand at Didyma and Baalbek, and any standing architecture of which he subsequently cleaned off the pagan pavements.[32]

In the vast hypaethral courtyard of the never completed Didymaion near Miletus in Asia Minor (Didim, Turkey), a large basilica, most likely of the fifth century, filled almost the entire space, establishing a baptistery in or in place of the pagan *naiskos*, and locating the sanctuary in such a way as to get a *synthronon* out of the monumental stairway.[33]

The huge proto-Byzantine basilica, which abutted the vast portico of the Temple of Jupiter Heliopolitanus, Phoenice Lebanensis (Baalbek, Lebanon) was sited centrally and over the place of the demolished pagan altar within the huge *temenos* courtyard [fig. 10].[34] From one of the engravings comprising

---

DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 124 no. 43; U. HOLSCHER, *The Excavations at Medinet Habu*, Chicago 1954, esp. 51 55 and fig. 45.

32 Theodor Wiegand's monumental publications documented not only the classical evidence but went some way, at this early date, to record and publish the Islamic and Christian re-working of these sites, including, at Didyma, later churches and chapels over the first Christian basilica of interest here.

33 The first Christian presence in the hypaethral cella of this Apollonian complex evidently took the form of a small martyrium which according to SOZOMEN (V, 20 in G. HANSEN, *GCS* 50 (1960), esp. V, 20, 7) the Emperor Julian ordered removed. See DEICHMANN, "Frühchristliche," p. 129 n. 61; Th. WIEGAND, *Didyma I*; Berlin 1924, esp. 323a and *Didyma II*, pp. 89–90; K. TUCHELT, "Tempel-Heiligtum-Siedlung: Probleme zum Topographie von Didyma," *Neue Forschungen in griechischer Heiligtumern*, Tubingen (DAI Abt. Athen) 1976, pp. 207–217; R. LOUIS, "Sur Didyma à l'époque byzantine," *Hellenica* 11/12, 1960, pp. 498–504.

34 The dimensions here are truly vast: the trilithon court (completed only c. 250 after a number of design modifications and reconstructions over two centuries) is approximately 86m x 97m; the decastyle temple portico columns were among the largest of antiquity. Apparently the church was originally "oriented" to the west and subsequently reversed; originally the open-air altar tower before the pagan stylobate would have generally been the location of the Christian sanctuary, and presumably the level of the basilica raised off the pagan paving level in order to negotiate the difference in elevation of the stairs which had themselves been cut into bedrock. See Th. WIEGAND, *Baalbek. Ergebnisse den Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen in den Jahren 1898 bis 1905*, Berlin & Leipzig 1921–25, 3 vols., esp. I, Taf. 17–19 and 44a; II, esp. 130ff, 149ff. and Abb. 188ff.; DEICHMANN,

Robert Wood's *The Ruins of Balbec otherwise known as Heliopolis in Coelosyria*[35] we may be seeing remains of the basilica; according to the excavators the orientation had been reversed at some time. The scale of this undertaking is intended to rival, if not quite to match the pagan; Didyma and the Christian conversion of the gigantic Roman *cella* of the "Serapeion" at Pergamon, Asia Caria (Bergama, Turkey), made into the church of Saint John;[36] these were among the very largest Christian *ecclesiae* of their day. Surely here the proto-Byzantine architectural responses were scaled to the pre-existing conditions both for the prestige of the new cult, and for the importance of the existing architecture.

Since Deichmann's pioneering study of 1939, in which the Theodosian legislation was linked to the idea of the triumph of Christianity, the temple-churches of the pagan-Christian interfaces have been further explored. For many sites the dating of conversion scenarios seem to be unrelated to the imperial rescripts leading up to 435. More and more the established context for conversion seems to lie later in the fifth but also in the sixth and even the seventh centuries.[37] Economic and social parameters for accelerated physical transformation are now particularly convincing especially in relation to secular conversions.

But for the later temple-churches in particular let me offer a specific cultural context: a classical renascence of the sixth and the first half of the seventh centuries; the so-called *byzantinische Antike* of the reigns of Anastasius (491–518) to Constans II (641–68) but seen especially clearly in that of Heraclius (610–41); an era of artistic production so-named by Leonid Matsulevich in 1929[38] upon his reflecting on the re-corrected dating of a

---

"Frühchristliche," p. 115 no. 6; CLAUDE, *Stadt*, esp. p. 72 n. 550 who refers to the dedication as that to the Virgin.

35 London 1757.

36 The roughly square courtyard of the site known locally as Kizil Avil is 300m a side; the central rectangular architectural unit of the tripartite plan is approximately 25m x 60m. The architectural evidence for conversion is the fitting of an apse and raised bema into the "eastern" end of this central hall. Dating is difficult: the first bishop is known to have been in place in the second century but the most substantial architectural adaptation of the adjacent citadel are the walls. The need for such work can be dated in connection with the Persian invasions suggesting at least the ability to get on with large projects at that time.

37 Specifically the dating arguments of FRANTZ, "Twilight," pp. 66, 70, and SPIESER "La christianisation," passim, but esp. p. 320.

38 L. MATSULEVICH, *Byzantinische Antike*, Berlin 1929, as discussed by E. KITZINGER, *Byzantine Art in the Making*, Cambridge Mass. 1977, pp. 107–112.

group of silver vessels which had appeared up to that time to be of the Hadrianic or Aurelian age. If a scenario of different workshop styles for different agendas is accepted, both luxurious secular silver vessels, and luxurious ecclesiastical silver[39] were manufactured in different modes in precisely the same location. Surely this is a phenomenon comparable to contemporary work on classical *temenoi* at a time when such remarkable and very different architecture *de novo* was underway in many parts of Byzantium. The temple-churches are an architectural phenomenon which relates current historicist, antiquarian and classicising sensibilities, but because they do not relate to structural or spatial innovation,[40] and indeed because there is a cultural disinclination to appreciate the aesthetic and formal principles of an architecture of spoliation and adaptation, they have not had a place in prevailing architectural histories.[41]

---

39 W. TREADGOLD (ed.), *Renaissances Before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Stanford Ca. 1984, esp. conclusion.

40 Traditionally architectural history has been mesmerised by the record of formal-spatial change or structural development, and theoretical *avante-gardes*. This has tended to exclude historical writing about the geographic spatial and temporal extent of normative or continuitive intentions when they are no longer novel as well as many regional and idiosyncratic flourishings.

41 R. KRAUTHEIMER, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, Harmondsworth 1965, passim; MANGO, *Architecture*, passim.

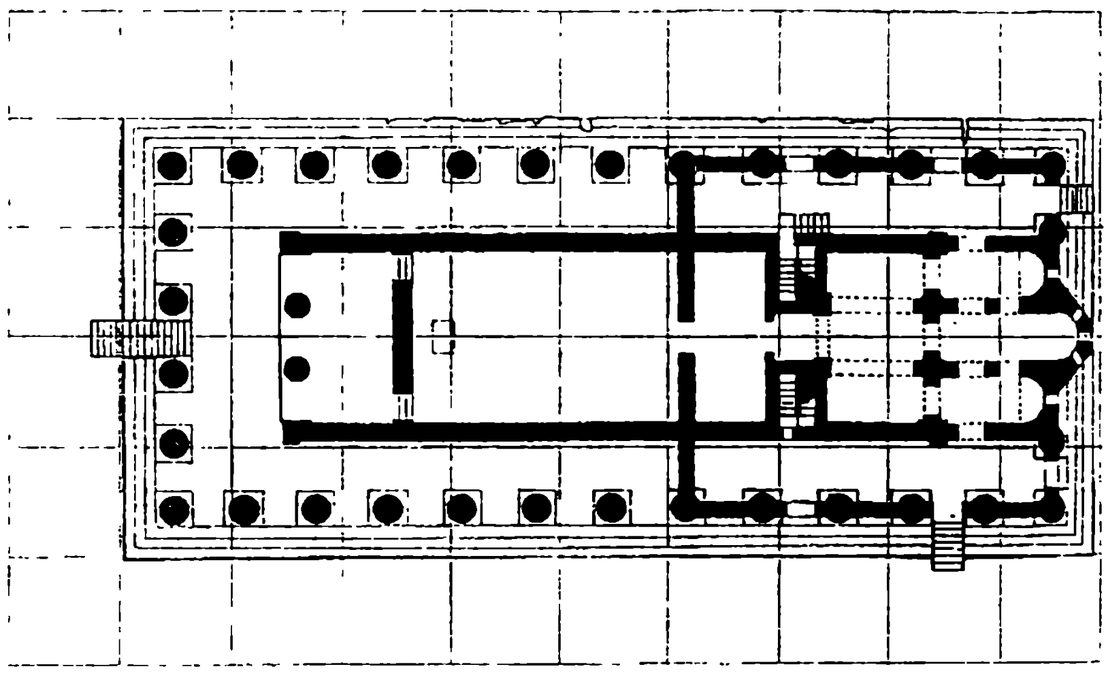


Figure 1. The "Temple of Concord" but probably the Temple of the Dioscurides (Agrigentum, Sicilia) [Agrigento, Sicily]: plan redrawn after Trizzino, "La basilica bizantina di San Gregorio agrigentino nel tempio della Concordia." *Rassegna*, 1954.

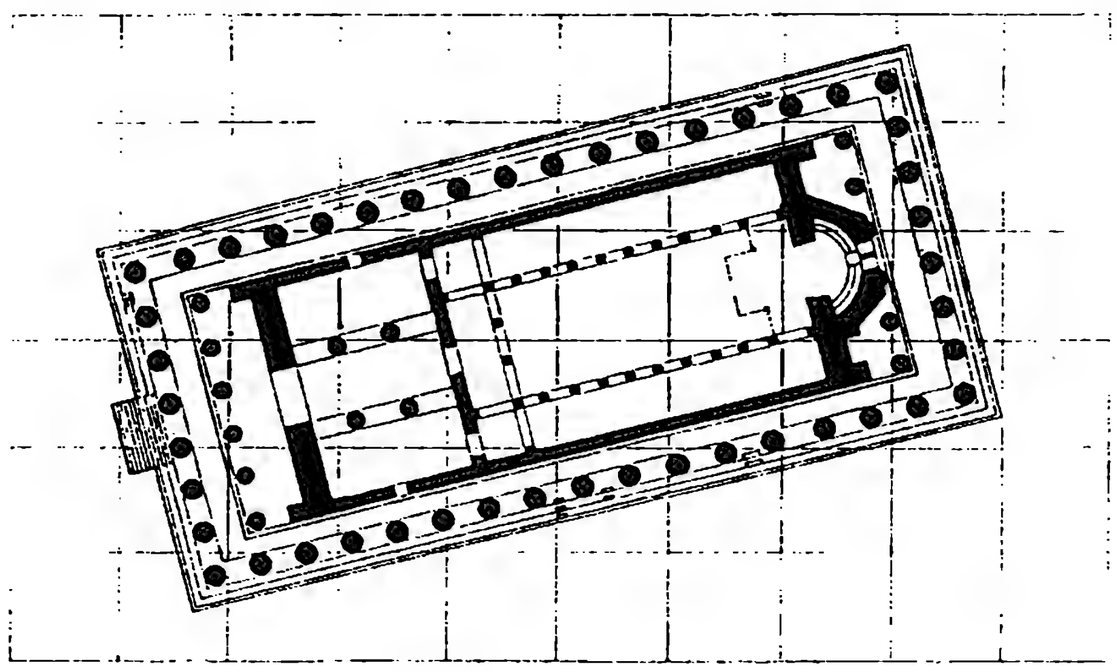


Figure 2. The Temple of Athena Parthenos (Athens, Attica) [Athens, Greece]: plan redrawn from J. Travlos, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens*, London 1971.

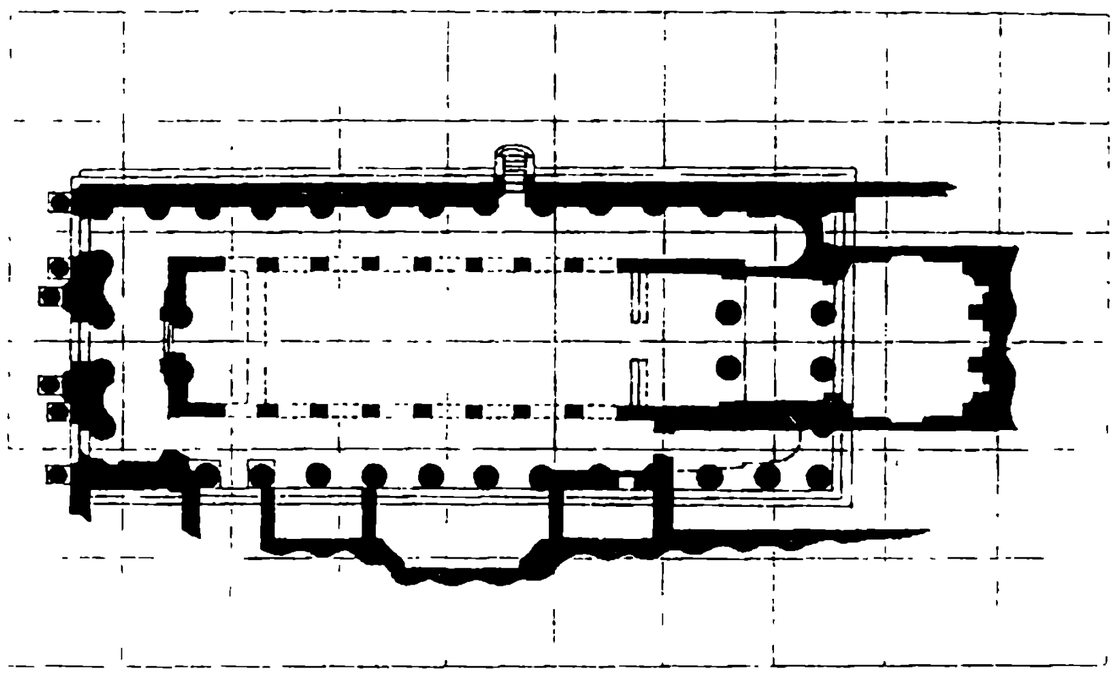


Figure 3. The Temple of Athena (Siracusa, Sicilia) [Siracusa, Sicily]: plan redrawn after Orsi, "Gli scavi intorno all' Athenaion di Siracusa negli anni 1912–1917," *Mon. Ant. Linc.* 25, 1919.

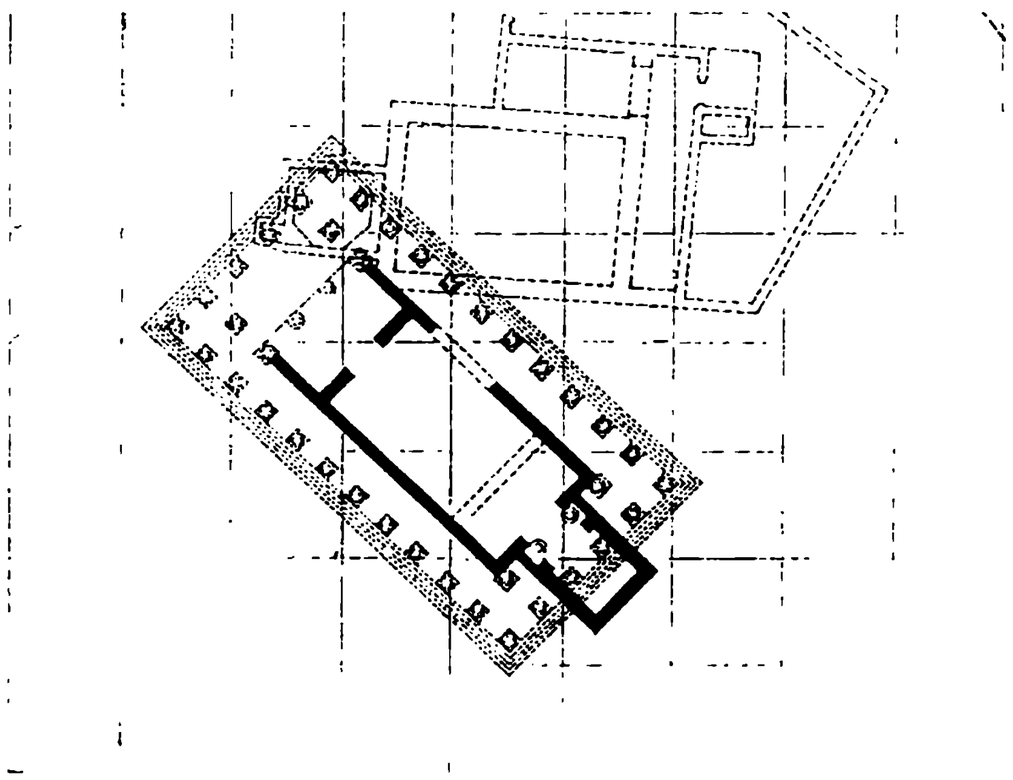


Figure 4. The Church adapted from Temple of Divinised Augustus and Livia (Ancyra, Asia Minor) [Ankara, Turkey]: plan redrawn from D. Krencker & M. Schede, *Der Tempel von Ankara*, Berlin & Leipzig 1936.

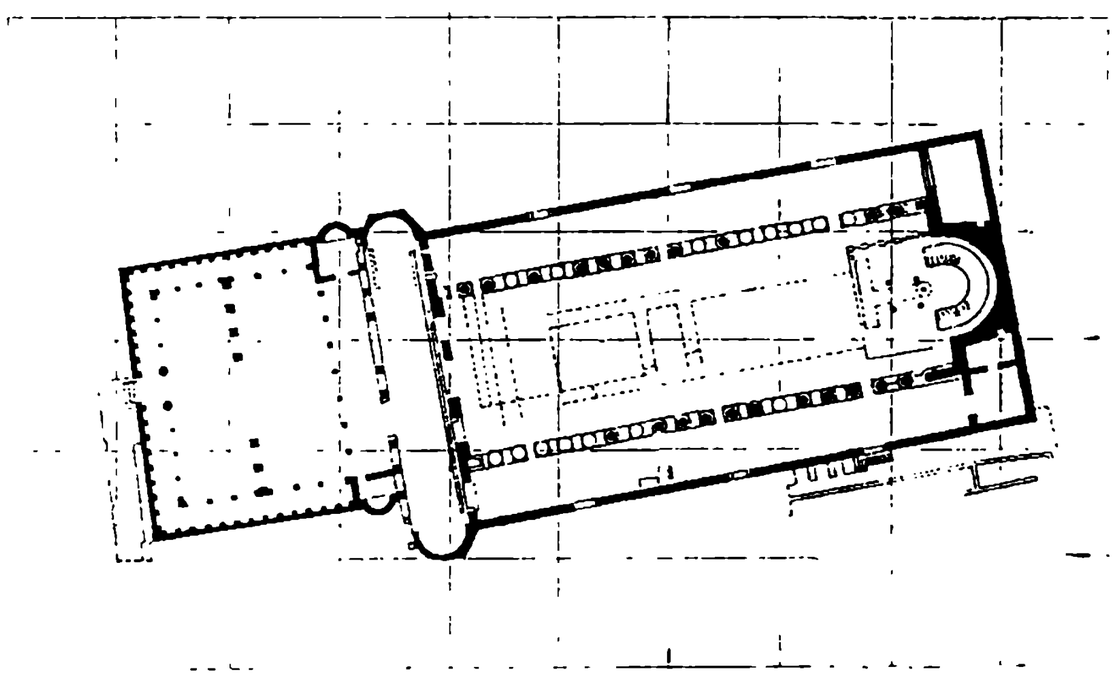


Figure 5. The Cathedral of Saint Michael/the Virgin (?) (Stauropolis (?)/Aphrodisias, Asia Caria) [Geyre, Turkey] adapted from the Temple of Aphrodite: plan redrawn from K.T. Erim, "Aphrodisias 1972," *AJA* 1973.

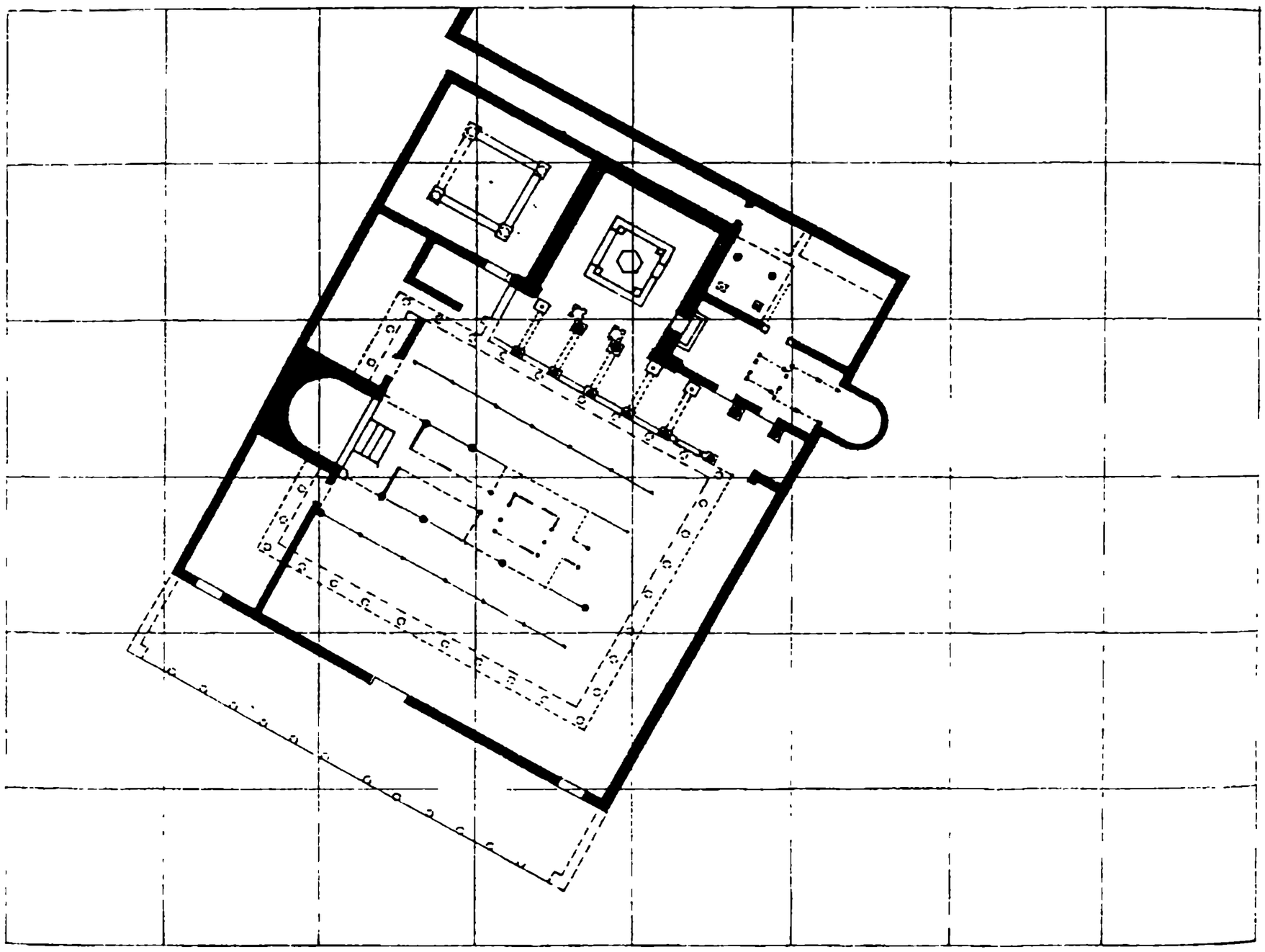


Figure 6. The "basilica of Servus"/cathedral? (Sufetula, Africa Proconsularis) [Sbeitla, Tunisia]: plan redrawn after N. Duval, "Église et temple en afrique du nord," *Bull. archeol. du Comm. des trav. hist. et scient.*, nouv. sér., fasc. 7, année 1971 (1973), fig. 5.

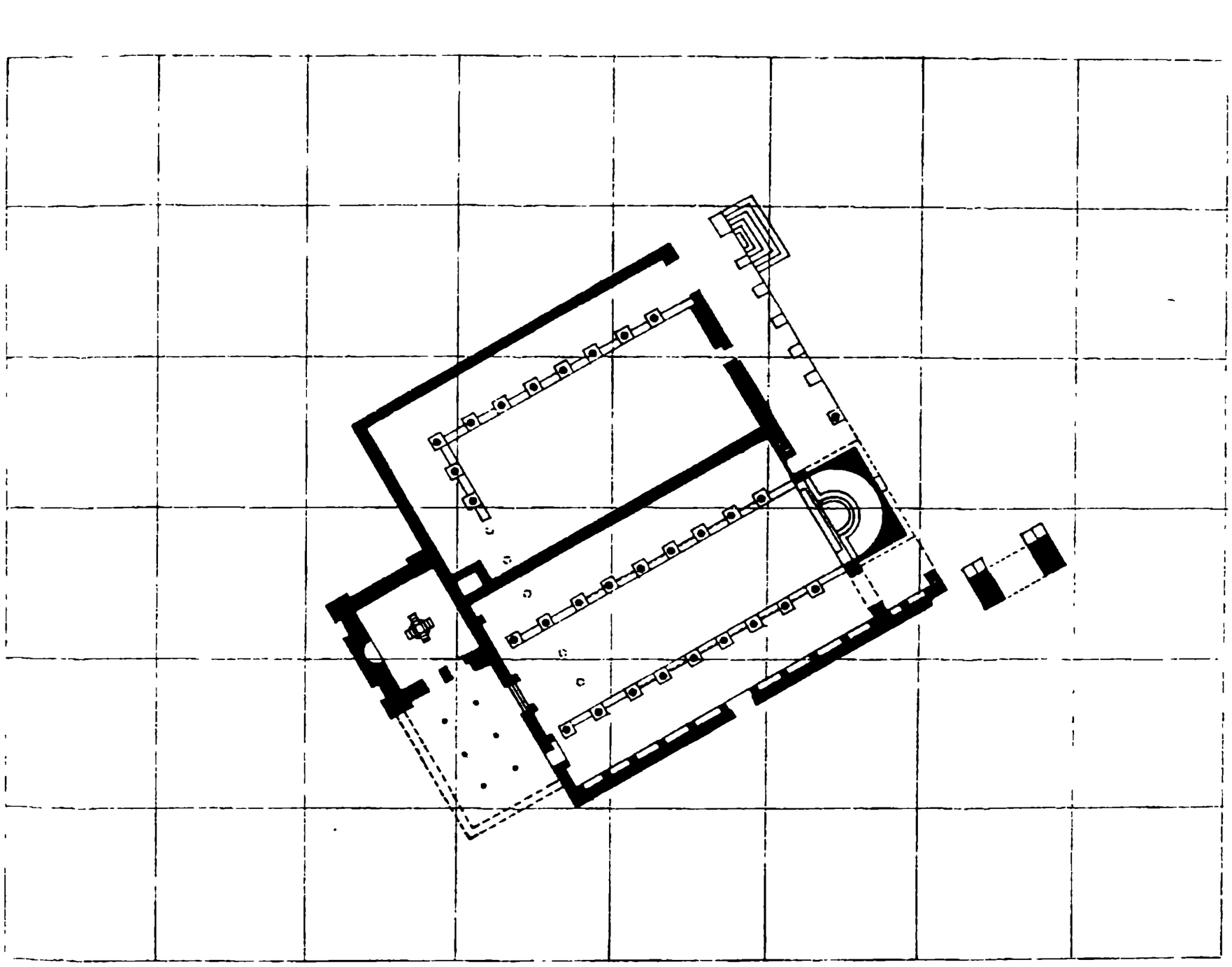


Figure 7. The church adapted from the "temple of Ceres" (Thuburbo Majus, Africa Proconsularis) [near El Fahs, Tunisia]: plan redrawn from N. Duval, "Église et temple en afrique du nord," *Bull. archeol. du Comm. des trav. hist. et scient.*, nouv. sér., fasc. 7, année 1971 (1973), fig. 10.

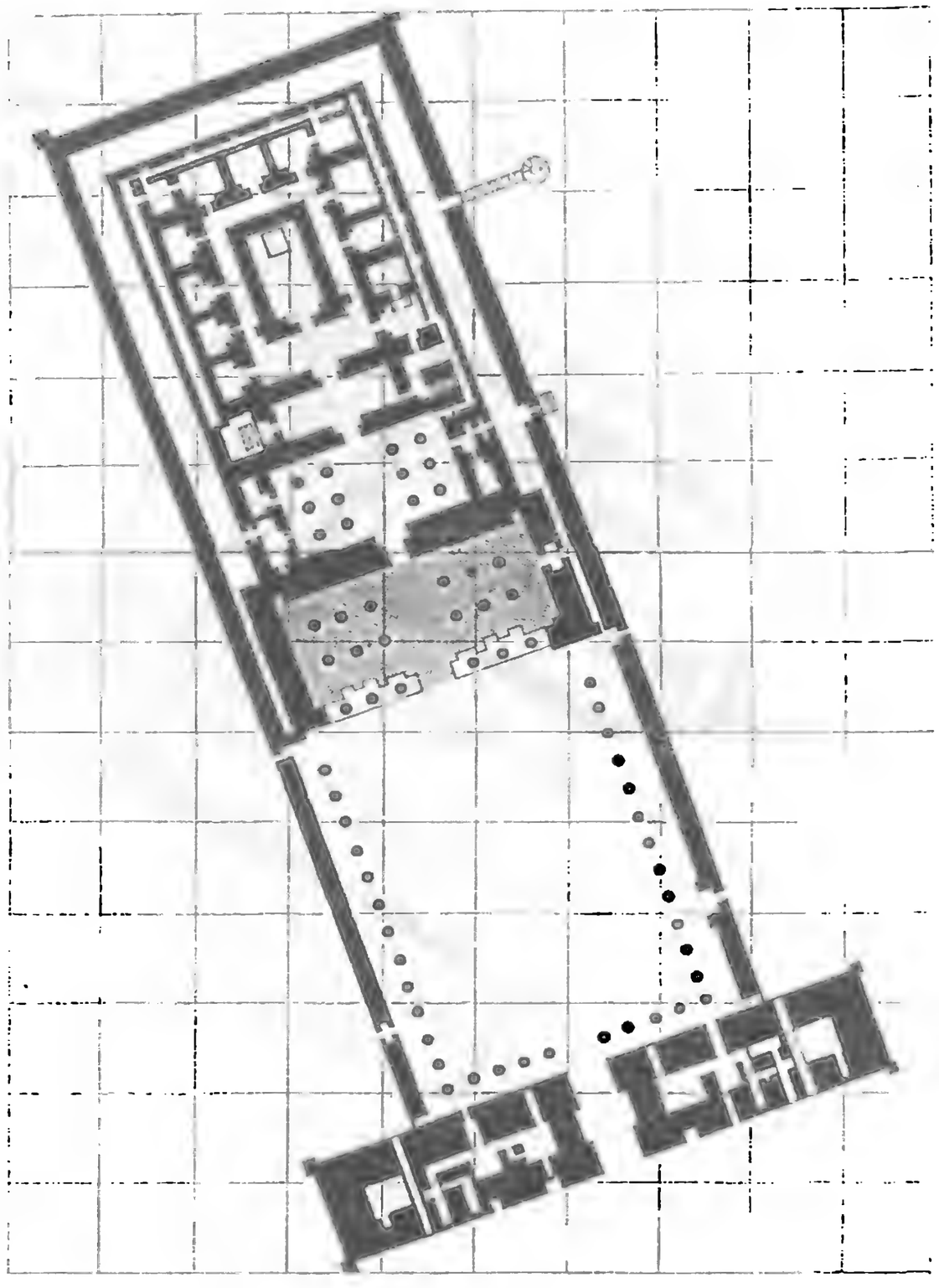


Figure 8. The church adapted into the Temple of Horus (Tentyra, Thebais Secunda) [Tell Edfou, Egypt]: plan redrawn from F. DUMAS, *Dendera et le temple d' Hathor I–IV*, Cairo 1969, with the space adapted to the Christian basilica shaded.

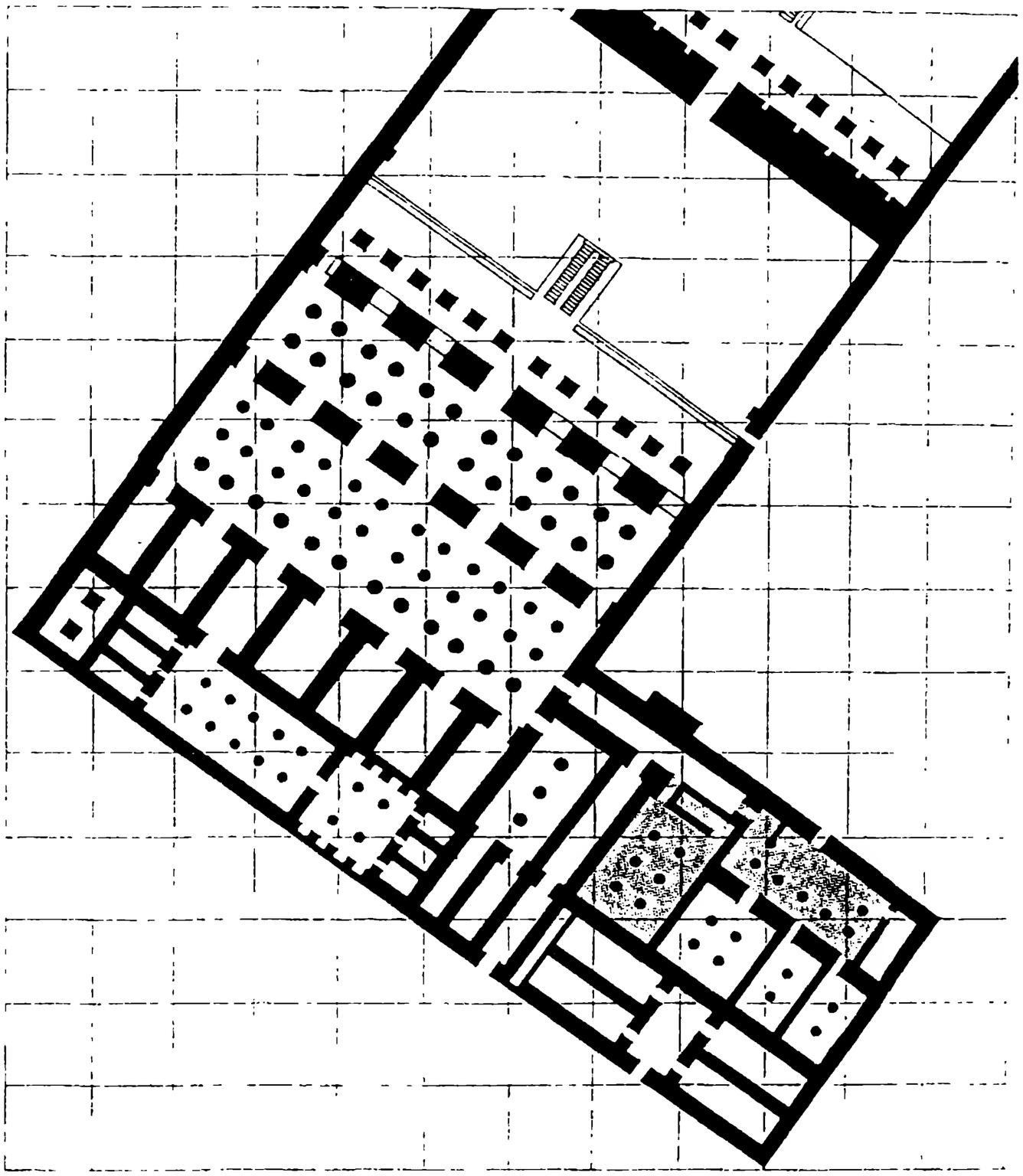


Figure 9. The churches adapted in the "Slaughtering hall complex" of the Osireion of Sethos I (Abydos, Thebais Secunda) [El'Araba el-Madfuna, Egypt]: plan redrawn (after A.H. GARDINER, *The Temple of King Sethos I at Abydos*, London & Chicago 1933–38) with the space adapted to the Christian basilica shaded.

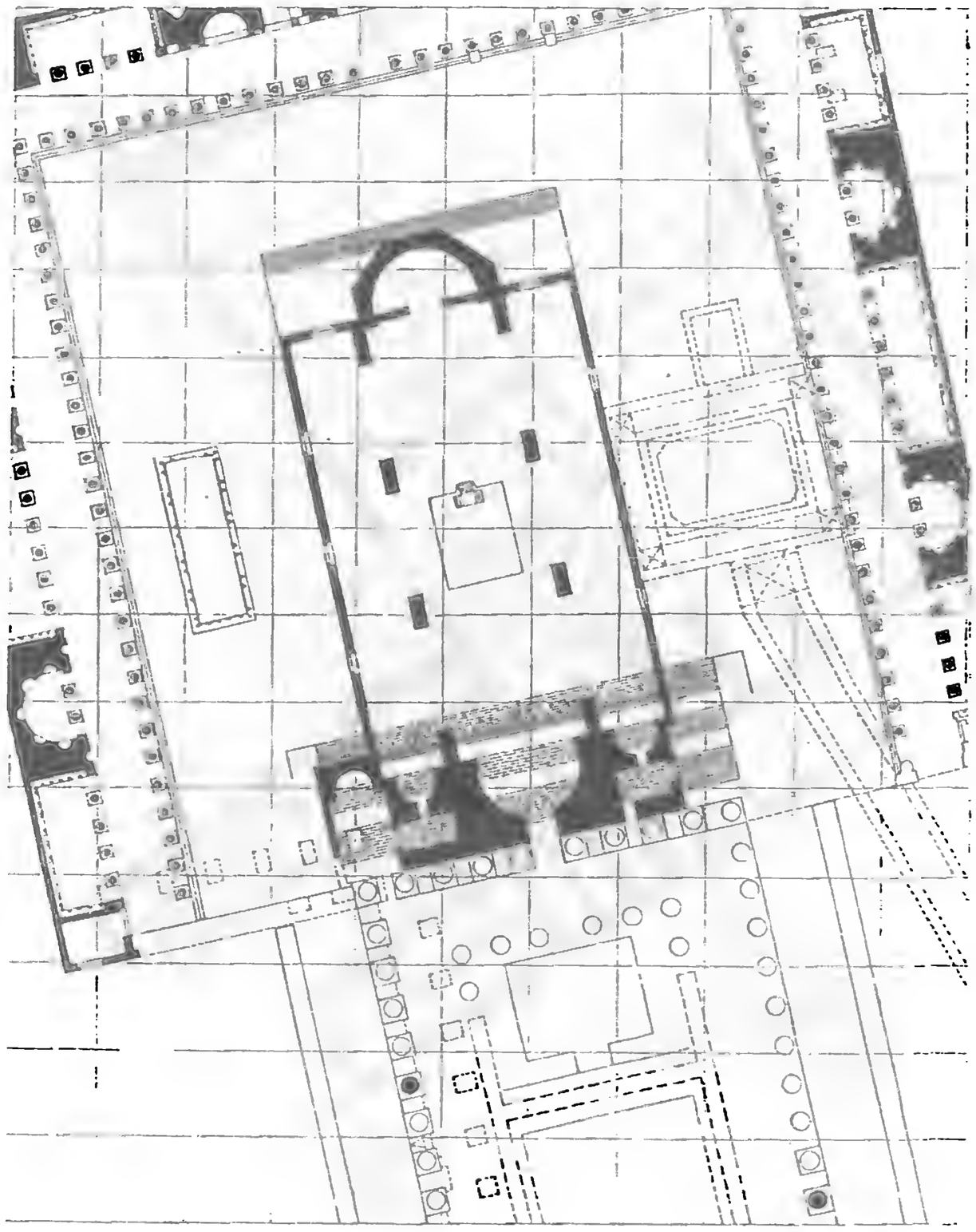


Figure 10. The Church placed into the court of the Temple of Jupiter (Heliopolis, Phoenice Lebanensis) [Baalbek, Lebanon]: plan redrawn from Th. WIEGAND, *Baalbek. Ergebnisse den Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen in den Jahren 1898 bis 1905*, Berlin & Leipzig 1921–25. Nota bene: This plan is not oriented due to space/scale limitations; east is to the top of the page.

BUILDING ON THE CLASSICAL PAST: 2

BUILDING HARBOURS IN THE EARLY BYZANTINE ERA: THE PERSISTENCE OF ROMAN TECHNOLOGY

Robert L. Hohlfelder / University of Colorado

Little is known of the building of harbours in the early Byzantine era.[1] Few actual sites have been identified, and literary evidence is practically non-existent.[2] Arguably, the most important passage for glimpsing the maritime engineering skills of that age is *De Aedificiis* 1, 11, 18–20. Here Procopius commented on the building *de novo* of two harbours on the Bosporus near Constantinople. This section related specifically to the construction at Heraeum. Later (1, 11, 22), he stated that another harbour was built at Eutropius in the same manner. The text and the Loeb translation by H.B. Dewing follows:

---

1 For example, see A. KAZHDAN's short entry on ports in the recently published *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* where no distinction is made between harbours and ports, and there is no discussion of maritime engineering in the technology section. For an explanation of the difference between a harbour and a port, see G.E. RICKMAN, "Towards a Study of Roman Ports," in A. RABAN (ed.), *Harbour Archaeology*, Oxford 1985, p. 105.

2 The harbour at Anthedon in Greece is perhaps the best example of an early Byzantine harbour that has been carefully explored. See H. SCHLAGER et al., "Der Hafen von Anthedon," *AA* 83, 1968, pp. 21–98. The on-going excavations at Caesarea Maritima continue to reveal details and questions about the nature of the harbour facilities of this Palestinian port city during the same period. See K. HOLUM et al., *King Herod's Dream — Caesarea on the Sea*, New York 1988; A. RABAN, *The Harbours of Caesarea Maritima*, I, Oxford 1989; R.L. VANN (ed.), *Caesarea Papers*, Ann Arbor 1992; R.L. HOHLFELDER, "Byzantine Coin Finds from the Sea: A Glimpse of Caesarea Maritima's Later History," in A. RABAN (ed.), *Harbour Archaeology*, pp. 179–184; idem, "Anastasius I and the Restoration of Caesarea Maritima's Harbor: The Numismatic Evidence," in A. BIRAN & J. AVERIM (edd.), *Biblical Archaeology Today, 1990*, Jerusalem 1993, pp. 687–696. While no comprehensive study of ports or harbours exists for the Mediterranean world after Rome, D.J. Blackman's lengthy articles on ancient harbours are a useful source for marine installations that may have survived into the early Byzantine era. See "Ancient Harbours in the Mediterranean, Part 1 and Part 2," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology and Underwater Exploration* 11, 1982, pp. 79–104, 185–211.

ἐνταῦθα δὲ καὶ λιμένων σκέπας ἀποτετόρνευται οὐ πρότερον ὄν. ἀκτὴν γὰρ εὐρὼν ἑκατέρωθι τοῖς τε ἀνέμοις καὶ ταραχῇ τοῦ ῥοθίου ἀποκειμένην, σωτήριον εἶναι τοῖς πλέουσι κατεστήσατο ὧδε. τὰς κιβωτοὺς καλουμένας ἀναρίθμους τε καὶ παμμεγέθεις πεποιημένος, ἀμφοτέρωθέν τε αὐτὰς τῆς ἠϊόνος ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἐγκαρσίας ἀπορριψάμενος, ἀεί τε τῶν προτέρων καθύπερθεν ἑτέρων ἐν τάξει ἐπιβολὴν ἐντιθέμενος, τοίχους πλαγίους ἀπ᾽ ἐναντίας ἀλλήλων ἀνέστησε δύο ἐκ τῶν τῆς ἀβύσσου κρηπίδων μέχρι ἐς τὸ ὕδωρ, ᾧ δὴ αἱ νέες ἐναπερειδόμεναι πλέουσι. πέτρας τε τὸ λοιπὸν ἀποτόμους ταύτῃ ἐμβέβληται. ὧν δὴ πρὸς τοῦ ῥοθίου ἀρασσομένων, ἀποκρουομένων τε τὴν τοῦ κλυδωνίου ἐπίθεσιν, καὶ ἀνέμου χειμῶνος ὥρα καταβάντος σκληροῦ, διαμένει τὰ ἐντὸς ἡσυχῇ ἅπαντα τῶν τοίχων, μεταξὺ μιᾶς ἀπολελειμμένης ἐπὶ τὸν λιμένα τοῖς πλοίοις εἰσόδου.

There too he skilfully contrived a sheltered harbour which had not existed before. Finding a shore which lay open to the winds from two directions and to the beating of the waves, he converted it into a refuge for voyagers in the following way. He prepared great numbers of what are called "chests" or cribs, of huge size, and threw them out for a great distance from the shore along oblique lines on either side of the harbour, and by constantly setting a layer of other chests in regular courses upon those underneath he erected two very long walls, which lay at an angle to each other on the opposite sides of the harbour, rising from their foundations deep in the water up to the surface on which the ships float. Then upon these walls he threw rough-cut stones, which are pounded by the surf and beat back the force of the waves; and even when a severe storm comes down in winter, the whole space between the walls remains calm, a single entrance being left between the breakwaters for the ships to enter the harbour.[3]

There is much of interest for the student of harbour technology in these few sentences, even allowing for Procopius' lack of expertise, and perhaps interest, in this field and for the uncertainty of his sources for this unique account of what he was describing. Had he heard about this construction from reliable sources; or did he merely embellish secondary or tertiary reports to glorify Justinian as an emperor who was not disquieted by the formidable challenges inherent in building at the interface of land and sea? These questions, of course, remain unanswerable.[4]

One should note, however, the lack of hyperbole in a context where extravagant overstatement of this particular imperial achievement would have been very easy. Building artificial harbours in coastal zones where all the

---

3 *Procopius VII, Buildings*, Cambridge 1940, pp. 93–95.

4 For an excellent discussion of the problems surrounding the works of Procopius of Caesarea, see A. CAMERON, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, Berkeley 1985.

elements of nature seem to conspire to deny success is one of mankind's most impressive accomplishments. When such efforts are fruitful, they represent human triumphs over the sea, however transitory they may be. Surprisingly, in this passage, where an excessive or effusive presentation of this venture would not have been out of place in his panegyric, Procopius is quite restrained — understating rather than overstating the magnitude of the natural obstacles that these constructions had to surmount. Perhaps this is simply the author's ignorance of the realities and complexities of harbour engineering. Nevertheless, his brief and bland account is actually quite specific and detailed. Despite its brevity, with careful explication it is far and away the most informative text on harbour engineering from the Byzantine corpus.

The issue of the meaning and use of wooden boxes or chests (*kibotos*) will be covered below. One should note here, however, that their positioning one on top of another to create a long wall of regular courses that breached the surface from deep below the sea represented a significant engineering accomplishment for any pre-industrial society. Unfortunately, Procopius merely mentioned this construction without comment. He chose to omit any discussion of the incredible technology and building skills required to effect such an amazing feat.[5]

His assertion that the boxes rested on foundations (*krepis*) suggests that Justinian's master builders were aware of a potentially fatal problem for any breakwater built on a sandy or muddy ocean floor.[6] Waves routinely smash into such structures and create downward forces of water that can quickly

---

5 Contra R. GERTWAGEN, "The Venetian Port of Candia, Crete (1299–1363)," in I. MALKIN & R.L. HOHLFELDER (edd.), *Mediterranean Cities: Historical Perspectives*, London 1988, p. 151, who argues for a "recession from the Roman sophisticated, advanced engineering skills in construction of underwater moles, from the Byzantine era onwards". If we accept the accuracy of Procopius' text (and there is no reason not to or to assume he merely follows a literary topos — so few accounts of the building of ancient harbours exist that there was no conventional method of presentation), one must reach quite the opposite conclusion. Moreover, it is not yet possible to make any statements about state of harbour construction in the Middle and Late Byzantine eras, for no significant data are yet available. Her speculation may be correct, but it is incautious to offer such a hypothesis as fact.

6 Contra GERTWAGEN, "Candia," p. 152, who states Procopius did not mention a foundation for the breakwaters at Heraeum and Eutropius, but see 1, 11, 19 above.

scour the bottom from beneath such installations, causing their damage or eventual collapse.[7]

In antiquity (at least by 15 B.C.), Roman harbour builders had discovered a remedy to counter this vexing natural phenomenon at Caesarea Maritima, Israel.[8] When confronted by a sandy ocean bottom on which two massive breakwaters would have to be constructed, they first installed a foundation platform of rubble or randomly placed stones on the ocean floor that was wider than the breakwaters that were to stand on this apron. Such riprap minimised the undertrenching of the main structures (in the Procopius passage, the ones formed by the chests) and also retarded the unwanted settling of such heavy structures, as their own weight slowly, but relentlessly, forced sand and silt to run out from under them (a process known as liquefaction).

While Procopius' reasons for selecting terms or phrases in particular passages can never be known, if we take him at his word here, the building of a marine breakwater on a foundation suggests that an important construction technique from the rich legacy of Roman engineering achievements had not been lost. The building of breakwaters from shore into the open sea to create an enclosed basin for ships and shipping required such an empirical solution to stabilise the moles. The wheel, or in this case a riprap foundation, might have been reinvented at Heraeum and Eutropius, but it seems more likely that one sees here the continuity of the past. Early Byzantine harbour engineers could have chosen what they needed from the

---

7 U.S. ARMY Coastal Engineering Research Center, *Shore Protection Manual*, Vol. 1, Washington 1977, p. 1/16.

8 Elsewhere, I contend that the actual construction of the Outer Basin of Caesarea's harbour complex was completed by the time of M. Agrippa's visit to Herod's kingdom in 15 B.C. This installation was functioning then, although all the support buildings on the breakwaters may not have yet been finished. See "The Changing Fortunes of Caesarea's Harbours in the Roman Period," in VANN, *Caesarea Papers*, p. 76. The Roman master builders working for Herod the Great on the vast harbour facilities of Caesarea Maritima had installed an apron or platform of randomly placed stones and rubble on a sandy ocean floor before construction began on the Southern and Northern Breakwaters of the Outer Basin. It is the earliest example of this type of prophylactic structure that has been uncovered so far, although earlier prototypes may await discovery. An early mention of this platform appears in R.L. HOHLFELDER et al., "Herod's Harbor at Caesarea," *BA* 46.3, 1983, p. 139. It is discussed in the publications cited above in n. 2 and in J.P. OLESON et al., "The Caesarea Ancient Harbour Excavation Project (C.A.H.E.P.): Preliminary Report on the 1980–1983 Seasons," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 11, pp. 281–305.

sophisticated and vast technological inheritance passed on to them.[9] It appears that is what they did at these two Bosporus harbour projects when they first placed foundations on the ocean floor before commencing construction of the breakwaters.[10]

This passage also does not preclude the possibility that the core structures of regular courses, the breakwaters themselves, had been constructed in a stepped design on the seaward side. Such a design feature would have provided even more durability for the surface of the breakwater most exposed to wave action. The stepped outer face of the breakwater would have diminished the energy of incoming waves and reduced their potential for damage.

Procopius' reference to "rough-cut stones" (*petra apotomos*) placed or set on the core structure indicates the building of a protective wall, possibly on both sides of the seawall but surely on its exterior face. A rubble wall

---

9 The technology of harbour building advanced dramatically during the early Roman era. See J.P. OLESON, "The Technology of Roman Harbors," *IJNA* 17, 1988, pp. 147–157 who talks about a "repertoire of techniques (of harbour technology) that gave each succeeding Mediterranean culture greater flexibility and a better chance of success" (p. 148). It is unlikely, as the Procopius passage indicates, that this body of engineering knowledge had been lost by the reign of Justinian. As I have suggested elsewhere, if such technological skills ever disappeared, it most likely would have been after the seventh century A.D.: R.L. HOHLFELDER, "Procopius *De Aedificiis* 1.11.18–20: Caesarea Maritima and the Building of Harbours in Late Antiquity," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 3, 1988, p. 58. It appears that ship size decreased after the sixth century, thereby reducing the need for large and elaborate harbour facilities. See G.F. BASS & F.H. von DOORNICK, Jr., *Yassi Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck*, College Station 1982. Although I refer to Justinian's harbour builders as engineers throughout this article, I do so with qualifications. They did not have the formal education or conceptual approach normally associated with this profession today. Better to call them master builders, men who had learned their craft on the job and who had the knowledge necessary to accomplish the task at hand without necessarily understanding why a particular solution worked.

10 We do not know how many other harbours were built or repaired in the early Byzantine era or what elements of surviving Roman technology may have been incorporated or modified in them — for example, in the construction of new harbours by Constantine at Thessalonica (ZOSIM. 2, 22), Constantius II at Seleukeia Pieria (THEOPH. 38, 6–7), Julian at Constantinople (ZOSIM. 3, 11), Theodosius at Nikomedia (MALAL. 14, 20), or repairs of existing facilities throughout the empire by Anastasius I (MALAL. 16, 21). Justinian appears also to have rebuilt a harbour at Anaplus near Constantinople: *De Aed.* 1, 7, 7.

abutting the seaward side of the regular courses of blocks, those formed by the submerged chests, would have provided an additional line of defence against the sea. Rocks of different sizes simply dumped on the outer side of a regular or revetted seawall would have eventually shifted during storms until they had achieved a snug fit with one another in a sloping configuration. Marine growth on these rocks would have helped to form a natural concretion that would have stabilised the entire mass. The passing of time would have actually strengthened, rather than weakened, such a structure.

Once such a sloping, outer face was in place, the natural perforations or pockets between the stones would have partially dissipated energy from incoming waves and deflected scouring currents before they could have reached and damaged the submerged sections of the main structure.[11] In this instance, Procopius' description of their function was precisely correct. They were "pounded by the surf and beat back the force of waves". But once again, he fails to acknowledge or recognise the sophistication of the building program at work.

The placement of the breakwaters on the oblique (as opposed to forming a protected basin by building circular or rectilinear moles) is another indication that the engineers of Justinian's harbours were quite familiar with the unique problems of construction in a marine environment and traditional solutions to them. The sites selected by the emperor for his two harbours were exposed to "winds from two directions and to the beating of the waves". The task facing the builders was to create all-weather basins at locations where no naturally favoured roadstead existed to provide a starting point. The project would have been daunting, but one suspects that imperial engineers had not been consulted about the desirability of either spot. Political and/or economic decisions had dictated siting; engineering considerations probably had not been taken into account.

As discussed above, the two breakwaters that defined and enclosed the basin area had been designed for maximum strength and longevity of use in the sea. By placing them on the oblique, and not at right angles or parallel to the shore, the engineers made another correct decision to address the natural forces to which both sites were exposed. This positioning decision dramatically reduced structural stress from storm surge, normal wave load, and longshore currents.[12] An incoming wave, for example, would have been

---

11 U.S. ARMY, *Shore Protection Manual*, II, 6/88.

12 It appears the siting of the main breakwater at the late Republican harbour of Cosa may have had this principle in mind. See D.J. LEWIS, "Cosa an Early Roman Harbour," in D.J. BLACKMAN (ed.), *Marine Archaeology*,

less likely to strike the entire seaward portion of a breakwater at the same time. Rather, it would probably have hit only one spot before rolling along the face of the breakwater and dissipating some of its energy. The oblique placement would also have been an effective design feature to baffle any longshore currents as well. Thus, the correct angle of the breakwaters in relationship to the prevalent winds, currents, and the normal run of waves in the long term would have reduced routine maintenance requirements and prolonged the life of the harbour.

All these building techniques referred to so casually in this passage are highly advanced, one might even say modern, but they were in no way unique. They represented a continuation of a grand tradition of maritime construction that the Romans had inherited from antiquity, but then greatly enhanced, following their discovery of pozzolana, a hydraulic concrete, and their employment of it at Cosa in Italy late in the second century B.C.[13] After the successful experimentation with this new material at this Republican harbour, the Romans had eliminated the need to site marine installations only where nature had endowed a suitable stage.

Harbour archaeology is still too limited to know how often a similar engineering competence was employed in the building of new ports or in the repair of older installations. One must remember that the situation Procopius described, the building of an artificial, all-weather harbour from a shoreline that offered no natural advantages, afforded a supreme test for ancient engineers and one that might only occur if the emperor had become personally and financially involved. We do not know how many of these artificial harbours were ever built in antiquity or in the Byzantine era. Most harbour sites had some natural protection afforded by a headland, offshore

---

London 1973, p. 240. At this location, the wave front and line of the breakwater met at an angle of 45 degrees. Such a positioning significantly reduced the wave load on the structure. In his discussion of Heraeum and Eutropius, Procopius seemingly informs us of the continuation of another important aspect of Roman harbour engineering.

13 For the use of pozzolana in marine structures and the specific use of this material at Caesarea, see J.P. OLESON, "Herod and Vitruvius: Preliminary Thoughts on Harbour Engineering at Sebastos, the Harbour of Caesarea Maritima," in RABAN, *Harbour Archaeology*, pp. 165–172; OLESON, "Technology of Roman Harbours," pp. 147–157; and J.P. OLESON & G. BRANTON, "The Technology of King Herod's Harbour," in VANN, *Caesarea Papers*, pp. 49–67. For the employment of pozzolana at Cosa, see the final report on the archaeological explorations edited by A.M. McCANN, *The Roman Port and Fishery of Cosa*, Princeton 1987.

island, or some other feature. Adding manmade installations to augment what nature had already provided was a much simpler and less expensive task.

Normally, whenever repairs of existing structures were undertaken, expediency was most likely the rule.[14] Extravagance or excessive construction probably was unusual, but more often likely to occur in an imperial sponsored project (if even there). Most ancient and early Byzantine cities had to rely on their own resources for the upkeep of their public buildings and spaces. Rarely was imperial help available, and any random acts of benefaction that may have occurred were totally unpredictable. Beyond normal municipal revenues, local patrons or members of the urban elite supplied the additional funds needed to keep a city functioning year in and year out. Thus, if harbour fees were not sufficient to meet the needs of normal maintenance requirements or if some natural catastrophe had created an extreme situation, more than likely a wealthy individual would be asked or required to underwrite such a project as a tangible manifestation of his civic duty or responsibility. Such a public service might not have been as glamorous as financing the building of a new church or stoa, but it would have been absolutely necessary in port cities if maritime commerce was to continue unimpeded.

To date, only a few ancient or Byzantine harbours have been investigated; fewer have been excavated. Of these explorations, the one that has provided the most information has been the on-going explorations at Caesarea Maritima.[15] Although this harbour construction took place more than five centuries before the building of Heraeum and Eutropius, one can see in Herod's facility many of the construction elements and design subtleties that Procopius alluded to in *De Aedificiis*. The line of continuity or conformity

---

14 As I have argued elsewhere, when Anastasius sponsored renovations for the Northern Breakwater at Caesarea, the simplest method of executing needed repairs was probably the one employed — perhaps simply dredging building stones and *spolia* from the sea to fill in breaches in the existing structure and to create a parapet wall high enough to restrict the overtopping of waves ("Procopius," pp. 58–59). Alternate methods for building and repairing harbours existed in the Roman and Early Byzantine world. No one solution, such as the use of pozzolana, ever became exclusive. Regarding the Anastasius repairs at Caesarea, I maintained that: "Hydraulic concrete was not used because it was not needed, and not because the technique had been lost", p. 59. Contra GERTWAGEN, "Candia," p. 150 who argues that its absence in these same repairs "proves" that the Byzantines were no longer acquainted with the unique qualities of this material. Also, see below n. 17.

15 See above n. 2 for current, general works on the harbour excavations at Caesarea Maritima and for a general bibliography.

from the Augustan Age to the early Byzantine era is clear. The placement of a foundation course on the ocean floor before the construction of a breakwater, the use of an exterior face of rocks to shield an interior core construction, and the positioning of the breakwaters to minimise wave assault from the most serious storms are features that find parallels at Caesarea Maritima.

Justinian's imperial engineers would have been quite at home on the construction site for Caesarea where so many technological innovations appear to have occurred for the first time, not the least of which was the use of wooden boxes in harbour construction (pl. 5). For what may have been the first time in history, boxes were floated from shore for hundreds of meters before being submerged to form regular courses of blocks for a breakwater.

In a recent article, I discussed how a large hollow wooden box (c. 11.5 x 15 x 2m), found in 1982 beneath the sea at the end of Caesarea's Northern Breakwater, seemed to provide an archaeological exegesis for Procopius' passage.[16] This double-walled chest or crib was actually a construction frame intended to contain pozzolana. It had been built on shore, moved into location by small boats, and submerged by filling the compartment between its two vertical walls with concrete (pl. 6). It came to rest on the ocean floor on a foundation course of rubble that had previously been set in place.

Although Procopius did not offer clues to what his chests were or how they worked, the Caesarea find provided a very probable archaeological explanation. The Caesarea form was huge and had been taken far from shore (c. 280 m) before it was lowered into the sea, thereby meeting two of his descriptive elements. It also rested on a foundation course of rubble. Its placement had been done with the precision that would have been necessary at Heraeum to construct a wall of regular courses.

The only variance between the Caesarea find and his text relates to his use of the verb, *aporripto*, to describe the positioning of the chests. Dewing's translation, "thrown down" is possible, but so is "set down", which seems a better fit for the technical procedures under discussion. Certainly, the formwork at Caesarea had not been thrown into the sea. It had been placed precisely at the terminus of the Northern Breakwater to serve as a pierhead for the entire structure. Yet Flavius Josephus, who provided a near contemporary account of the building of King Herod's harbour, used an equally colourful verb, *emballo*, to describe the building of the great Southern Breakwater (*AJ* 15, 335). Procopius, in the passage under discussion, also used this same word in a similar context, perhaps in an effort

16 HOHLFELDER, "Procopius," pp. 54–62.

to provide a different action verb than *aporripto*, but one that conveyed the desired nuance. Although separated by centuries, both writers, who were historians and not engineers, seem to have engaged in identical creative license to describe a procedure they may not have fully understood.

But apart from this imprecision, which might be nothing more than an intentional stylistic device, Procopius might well have been describing what had occurred at Caesarea centuries earlier. In fact, his description offered a better explanation of how concrete was employed than that of Josephus (*BJ* 1, 411–413 and *AJ* 15, 334–338). The Jewish historian's otherwise excellent section on the construction of the harbour did not mention concrete at all. Like Procopius he may not have known the difference or considered it noteworthy. He simply stated that large blocks of stone were lowered into the sea to form the breakwater.

If hydraulic concrete was employed by Justinian's engineers, and the sites Procopius described probably would have demanded its use, the boxes mentioned in his passage might well have been construction forms intended to shape and contain pozzolana in a liquid state until it had hardened or cured underwater. One concrete block could then have provided a relatively smooth surface upon which another form could have been placed to receive the liquid concrete. In such a way, two long walls of "regular courses" could have been constructed even from a great depth of water.

There is another possible explanation of how the chests might have been used. They might have conveyed rocks to a designated location at sea. Once in position, additional ones, perhaps stored on a barge, could have been added to the chest until it eventually overcame the buoyancy of the wood and sank into the sea. However, there are problems with this interpretation. A box filled in this way would have been very difficult or perhaps impossible for ancient builders to have controlled in its descent. When the critical weight had been reached, it would have slipped beneath the sea rapidly with a very real possibility of crashing upon impact with the ocean floor or a previously submerged box. In such a case, its contents would have spilled out randomly. In some instances, an uncontrollable descent leading to a crash landing might not have been an undesirable outcome. But when the engineering objective was to create a wall or breakwater with regular courses, as at Heraeum and Eutropius, a system of bombing the ocean floor with boxes of rocks would not necessarily have achieved the intended result. It is also possible that before the box was completely full, it would have submerged, leaving part of it empty.

Moreover, the only known uses of boxes in the open sea for harbour construction in antiquity, the one mentioned above and the two to be

discussed below, were as forms for the placement of pozzolana and not as containers for rubble. The use of wooden boxes as conveyors of rubble is a possibility.[17] On the other hand, their employment as forms for the installation of hydraulic concrete is an archaeological certainty. At Caesarea, the only place where their remains have been found *in situ*, they were intended to contain pozzolana, not to carry rocks.

In 1990 Professors Avner Raban and R.L. Vann, co-directors of the Caesarea Ancient Harbour Excavation Project (CAHEP), discovered another wooden box beneath Caesarea's sea at the terminus or pierhead of the Southern Breakwater.[18] It had been used as a construction frame for a large concrete block (c. 14.5 x 7 x 4m) that served as a foundation element for what may have been a massive lighthouse that marked the entrance channel to the harbour. Although this site had been investigated many times by CAHEP personnel, a late spring storm that year had unexpectedly removed at least two meters of sand from the general area, revealing pieces of the concrete foundation block for the first time. Excavation along the concrete face in turn uncovered some of the form's timbers.

Field work at this site continued in 1991 and 1992 under the direction of Avner Raban. A second concrete block with segments of wooden formwork still in place was discovered adjacent to the one uncovered in 1990. Perhaps the foundation for the lighthouse was a concrete island constructed by setting blocks side by side or in some other arrangement.[19]

---

17 GERTWAGEN, "Candia," p. 149, who claims without solid archaeological data that wooden boxes were used in the Anastasian harbour repairs of the Northern Breakwater at Caesarea Maritima: "The layers of rubble prove it was lowered in wooden caissons, but without the use of concrete." Unfortunately, that is not the case. The rubble overburden only proves that this material was used in the repairs; it does not speak to how it was transported onto the breakwater (see above n. 14). Certainly, no remains of wooden boxes were found in the excavations conducted in 1984, beyond a few miscellaneous pieces of timber that may have been uncovered. No wood of significance in any kind of meaningful context came to light. See R.L. HOHLFELDER, "The 1984 Explorations of the Ancient Harbors of Caesarea Maritima, Israel," *BASOR* Supplement 25, 1987, pp. 1–12. Her theory is possible, but to date it is unsupported by any evidence.

18 K. HOLUM et al., "Preliminary Report on the 1989–1990 Seasons," in R.L. VANN (ed.), *Caesarea Papers*, p. 84; R.L. VANN, "Underwater Excavations in Herod's Harbor at Caesarea Maritima," *Archaeological News* 16, 1991, pp. 61–70.

19 R.L. VANN, "The Drusion: a Candidate for Herod's Lighthouse at Caesarea Maritima," *IJNA* 20, 1991, pp. 129–139.

A detailed report on the nature of this formwork and some thoughts about how the concrete was transported and poured into the sea at this location is now in preparation by Chris Brandon, the head architect for the current round of underwater investigations.[20] What follows here only highlights the preliminary results of this excavation to date, emphasising how this new discovery at Caesarea provides an even better explanation of what Procopius may have been describing.

The newly discovered Caesarea forms were wooden boxes or chests in the truest sense. Unlike the hollow construction frame discussed earlier, both of the forms discovered to date at the lighthouse location had substantial floors in place (pl. 7). Moreover, they were built with mortice and tenon joinery, mirroring contemporary ship construction of the early Roman empire (pl. 8). They had been built with the precision of a merchantman or warship for what was to be only one journey.

To best describe these boxes, which are not mentioned by Josephus in his account of the building of Caesarea's harbour or by Vitruvius in his section on harbour building in the Augustan Age (*De Arch.* 5, 12, 2–6), one should perhaps call them single-use barges. They were constructed on shore, perhaps of parts prefabricated elsewhere and transported to Caesarea for final assembly.[21] After they had been filled in part with concrete, possibly to facilitate the towing of a large floating chest with a high freeboard, small boats powered by oars moved them to the locations where they would be submerged. Workers on a support boat or floating work station added additional liquid pozzolana to the form until it slowly sank into its exact location in a controlled manner (pl. 9). Parts of the upper section of freeboard could have been recovered for reuse after the concrete had hardened underwater, but as the excavations have revealed, the lower portions were left

---

20 Brandon's paper was presented at the Fifth Symposium on Ship Construction in Antiquity held at Nauplion, Greece in August 1993 with publication to follow in the proceedings volume.

21 We now know that wood for the hollow frames was imported from Italy, as was the pozzolana used in the hydraulic concrete (OLESON, "Herod and Vitruvius," p. 168; OLESON & BRANTON, "Technology of King Herod's Harbour," p. 60). Perhaps some of the wood was actually fashioned into the components of the hollow caissons before being transported to Caesarea, or the forms may have been fashioned on shore during the winter months when construction work in the open sea was not possible. Samples of the wood and concrete from the single-purpose barges are now being analysed. Similar findings regarding provenance of these substances would not be surprising. Josephus did say that building materials were all imported "from outside at great expense" (*AJ* 15, 332).

in place on the ocean floor. Fortuitous circumstances, including the stabilisation of the bottom section of the frames with a rubble berm, preserved the wood over the centuries.

At Caesarea, the shallow depth of water near the harbour entrance (c. 3–5 m) did not necessitate positioning rows of submerged barges on top of one another to reach the surface. But these barges allowed the employment of such a construction technique. A precise stacking of concrete blocks, such as appears to have been done at Heraeum and Eutropius, to build a seawall from a great depth was well within the capabilities of the builders of Caesarea's harbour.

If the chests described by Procopius were really single-use barges or double-walled hollow forms for the installation of pozzolana, as I have suggested, he has provided both a detailed description of their use that conforms precisely to the archaeological evidence from Caesarea and valuable information not available in accounts of the early Roman Imperial writers, Josephus and Vitruvius. Although the data from King Herod's harbour and the date of this text are separated by centuries, they compliment one another nicely and combine to offer a vivid picture of one of antiquity's most impressive engineering accomplishments — the employment of hydraulic concrete in the open sea to create an artificial harbour along an exposed coastline.

Five centuries before Justinian, Josephus commented with understandable praise and awe at Herod's bold, but successful, attempts to conquer nature by building Caesarea's harbour facilities where he did (*BJ* 1, 410). What he did not tell us was that Roman engineering accomplishments, specifically the use of pozzolana, had made such an act of daring possible. Five hundred years later, Procopius might have used similar words to describe Justinian's harbour constructions in the Bosporus. In many respects, the Byzantine emperor had duplicated the Jewish king's maritime building venture. Had Procopius known or cared to explicate his text further, he might have specifically talked about the continuing use of wooden boxes or chests as containers and forms for the installation of pozzolana in the sea.[22] In such a

---

22 Contra R. GERTWAGEN, who argues that the use of pozzolana had disappeared by the age of Justinian. Her evidence, however, is tenuous: its non-use in the construction of the moles of Anthedon, another Justinianic harbour (see above n. 13), and its non-appearance in the repairs of the Northern Breakwater at Caesarea (see above n. 14). Another point in her argument is: "If Justinian bothered to ship such a heavy precious cargo all the way to North Africa (reference to the shipwreck of marble architectural members found at Marzamemi), why did he not import pozzolana by sea from the island of Santorini or from Asia Minor? This was doubtless

way, and with the other harbour building techniques and design features discussed above, the engineering technology of imperial Rome had survived. In at least two places in the waters of the Bosporus, conformity to a venerable tradition had survived into the sixth century.

---

because the Byzantines were not acquainted with the hydraulic qualities of pozzolana" ("Candia," p. 150). Once again, her negative evidence is difficult to accept as proof. Since no record of massive shipping of pozzolana has survived in the literature, she suggests this silence proves the Byzantines had lost the knowledge of the unique qualities of this material. First of all, one cannot say whether Justinian did or did not import pozzolana from Naples or elsewhere. The extant sources simply will not permit a statement one way or the other on this point. Secondly, there is no evidence for the shipping of pozzolana in massive quantities in the Roman literary corpus either. Our awareness of such transport on a massive scale can only be deduced from the archaeological data from Caesarea. See OLESON & BRANTON, "Technology of King Herod's Harbor," p. 58. It seems imprudent to conclude anything about Byzantine use or non-use of pozzolana from what does not appear in our sources. Caissons, both with and without floors, that are floated to their designated locations continue to be used in the construction of breakwaters. Today, however, they are made of concrete: U.S. Army, *Shore Protection Manual*, vol. 2, 6/93.

Plate 1. The Temple of Athena Parthenos on the Acropolis (Athens, Attica) [Athens, Greece] from Stuart & Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated*, London 1762–1816.

Plate 2. The Temple of Artemis Agrotera at Eleusis (Athens, Attica) [Athens, Greece] from Stuart & Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated*. London 1762–1816.

Plate 3. "The Temple of Vienna" [Vienne, France] from Texier & Pullan, *Byzantine Architecture illustrated by examples of edifices erected in the East during the earliest ages of Christianity with historical and archaeological description*, London 1864.

Plate 4. The church adapted from the Temple of Athena (Siracusa, Sicilia) [Siracusa, Sicily]: view of 6 of the 14 south peribolos columns interiorised *in situ* the south aisle: (unknown source).

Plate 5. The Outer Basin of King Herod's Harbour. North is to the right. The site of the discovery of the hollow construction frame is number 1; the lighthouse foundation and the location of the single-use barges is number 2. Photograph by Ofek.

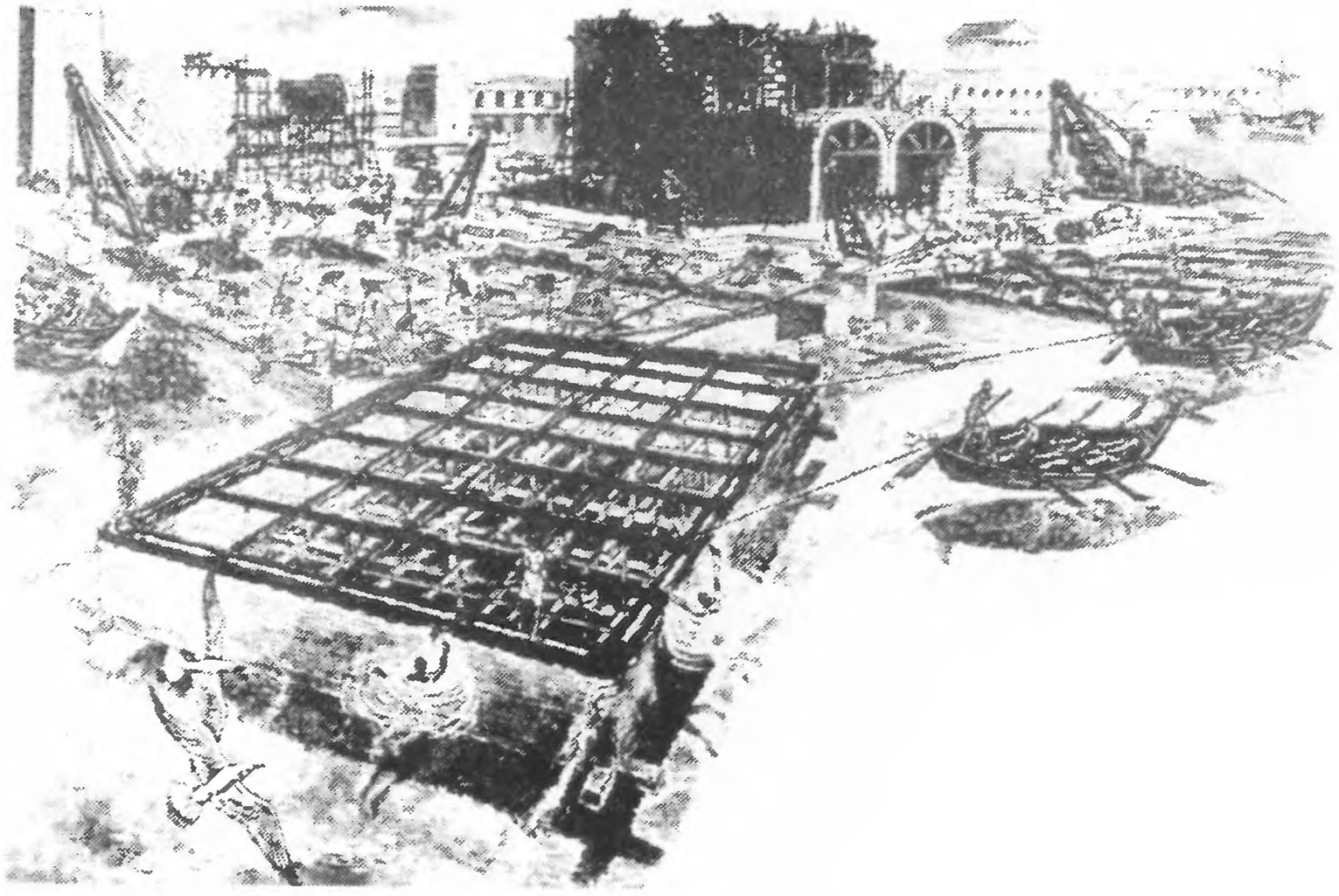


Plate 6. The double-walled hollow form is being pulled into position at the end of the Northern Breakwater. Concrete was lowered into the frame with trip-baskets, rather than through a chute, to prevent its separation. Painting by J. Robert Teringo. Courtesy of the National Geographic Society.

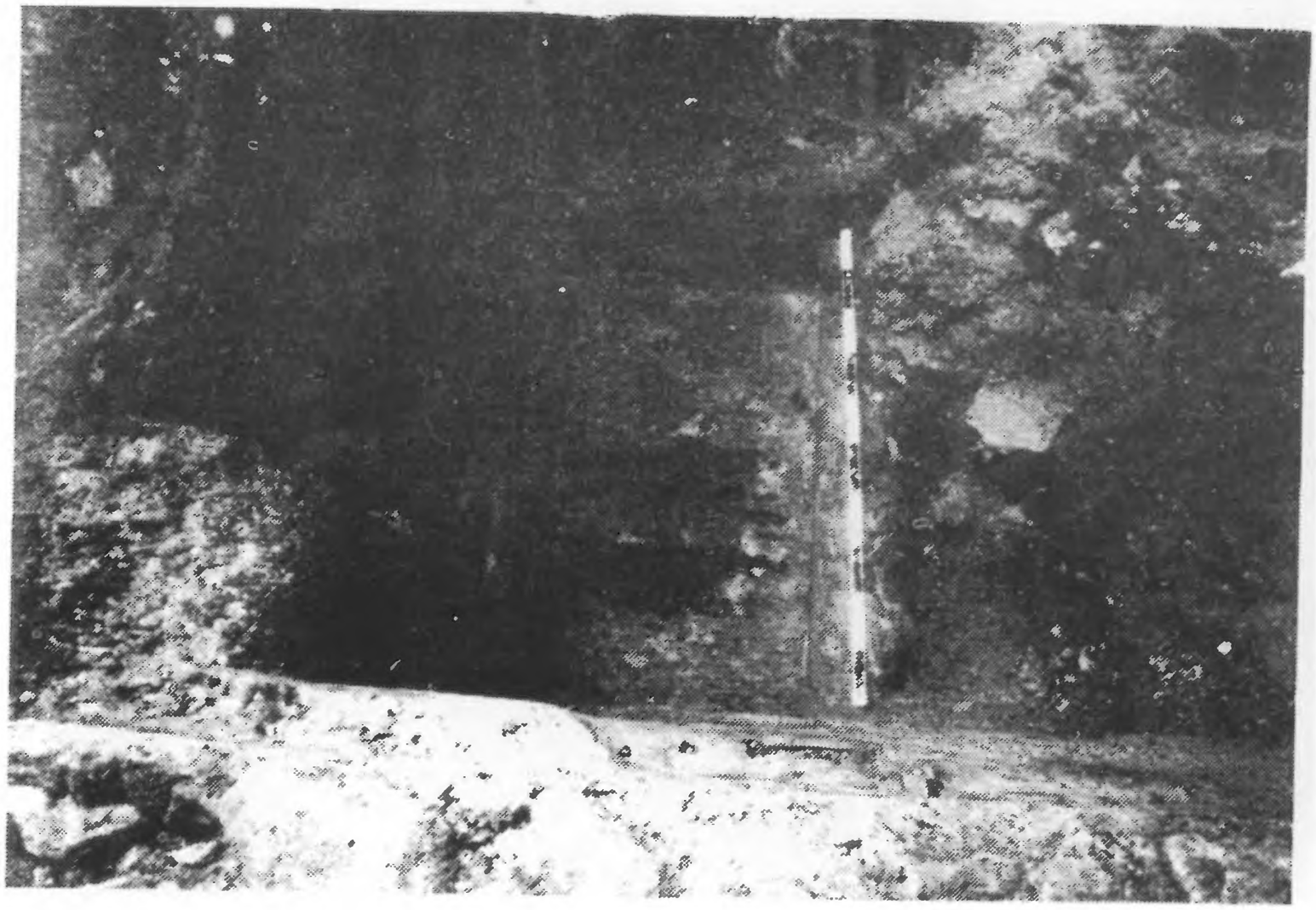


Plate 7. The floor of a single-use barge is clearly visible after the pozzolana had been removed from an inner compartment. Photograph by D. Syon.

Plate 8. A diver, literally head under heels in his work, examines the underside or floor of a single-use barge. The mortises are visible in the uppermost surviving plank. Photograph by M. Little.

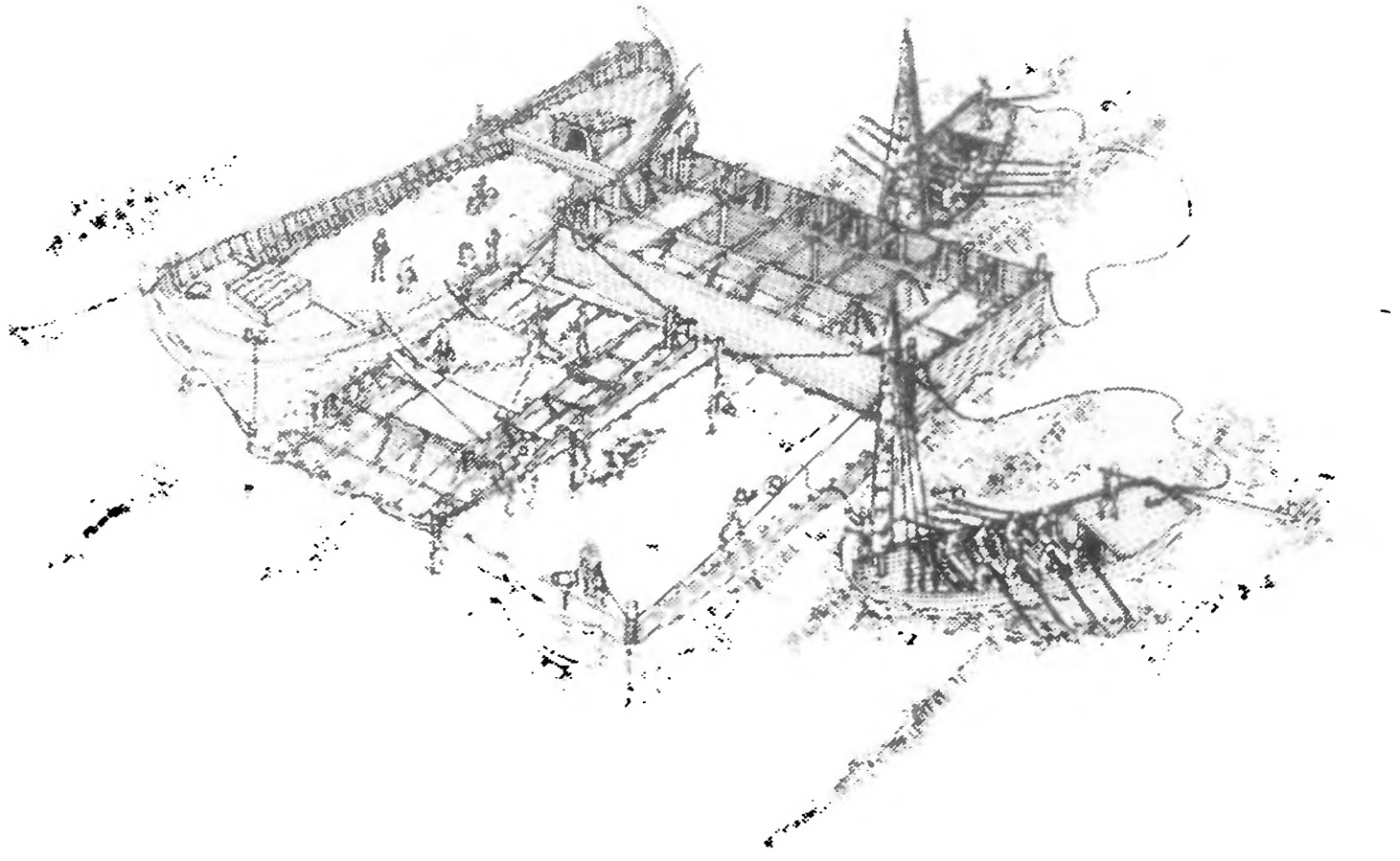


Plate 9. An artistic rendering of a possible scenario for the construction of the concrete island that served as a foundation platform for Caesarea's lighthouse. One barge has been submerged in position and has been filled completely with pozzolana that has hardened; another also rests on the ocean floor and is being filled; a third has been moved into position, but is still afloat. A support boat, that contains the pozzolana, stands at anchor nearby to serve as the work and support station during construction. Sketch by Chris Brandon.